



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07605249 1

THE QUIET KING



1. Religion, America.

2. Jesus Christ - Freedom



J. M. Calver

Oct. 25 - 1900

150

Mason

THE QUIET KING

Behold my servant! . . . He shall not cry, nor lift up,
nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised
reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not
quench.

He is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood . . .
and he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name
written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R
L



THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE

UNIT 10

Unit 10



THE QUIET KING

A Story of Christ

BY
CAROLINE ATWATER MASON

*Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster.*

—Tennyson

PHILADELPHIA
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY
MDCCCXCVI

EX-17



THE NUMBER
PUBLIC LIB. (S)
936616A
ANTON, LINDA AND
THELEN FOUNDATION
B 1988

Copyright 1896 by the
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

PRINTED
FROM THE SOCIETY'S OWN PRESS
1896

PREFATORY

THE QUIET KING is not a religious romance. Although written with the thought that "truth embodied in a tale shall enter in at lowly doors," it is less a story even than a closely connected series of studies which draw all their interest and significance from one central figure. In them the writer has sought, with reverence which grew "from more to more" with every hour of study, to make real to herself and to others the impression made upon men and women of his generation by Jesus of Nazareth. To grasp and clothe in language the transcendent beauty of that life is more than one could hope to do; what alone is hoped for is to suggest this, if only in some faint degree.

The use of fictitious characters is exceedingly slight. In *Adriel* I have sought to embody—in his youth—one type of the Messiah conceived of by the patriotic Jews of the period; in his later life, one of the unknown, unrecorded followers of Christ. Undoubtedly of this class were men and women who had been the subjects of his healing,

and it is known that early believers found their way to Rome. The characters of Ithamar and Rhoda, and the early history of the family of Lazarus are drawn from imagination, but conformably to tradition and probability in all essential points.

Where a scriptural scene or situation has been presented in a manner at variance with the commonly received conception, it has been done with careful consideration and comparison of authorities.

I wish to express my personal obligation for help and direction in this study, to Professor Stevens of Rochester, and Professor Brown of Newton. The authors whom I have found, out of a great number consulted, most vitally helpful and important have been Schürer, Edersheim, Stanley, Ullmann, and Godet.

CAROLINE ATWATER MASON.

NEW HAVEN, 1896.

CONTENTS

BOOK I

THE NATION'S WATCHING, 9

INTERLUDE, 115

BOOK II

THE BROTHER OF MEN, 123

BOOK III

THE LIFE OF MEN, 219

BOOK IV

THE SOUND OF MANY VOICES, 273

ILLUSTRATIONS

REPRODUCTIONS FROM GREAT PAINTINGS

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE, <i>G. F. Watts,</i> <i>R. A.,</i> | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| THE ARRIVAL AT BETHLEHEM, <i>L. O. Merson,</i> | 56 |
| THE REPOSE IN EGYPT, <i>Le Rolle,</i> | 85 |
| CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN, <i>E. Zimmermann,</i> | 136 |
| CHRIST CASTING OUT THE MONEY CHANGERS, <i>F.</i> <i>Kirchbuck,</i> | 176 |
| BETHANY, <i>Heinrich Hofmann,</i> | 230 |
| THE CONSOLING VIRGIN, <i>W. A. Bouguereau,</i> | 248 |
| ENTRY OF CHRIST INTO JERUSALEM, <i>B. Plockhorst,</i> | 264 |
| GOLGOTHA, <i>J. L. Gerome,</i> | 283 |
| HOLY WOMEN AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST, <i>W. A.</i> <i>Bouguereau,</i> | 291 |

BOOK I

THE NATION'S WATCHING

ON that hard Pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell.
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell.

In his cool hall, with haggard eyes
The Roman noble lay;
He drove abroad, in furious guise,
Along the Appian way.

He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crown'd his hair with flowers—
No easier nor no quicker pass'd
The impracticable hours.

The brooding East with awe beheld
Her impious younger world,
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,
And on her head was hurl'd.

The East bow'd low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

—*Matthew Arnold.*

THE QUIET KING

CHAPTER I

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.
—*Jeremiah.*

IT was just at daybreak of an early day of October in the year B. C. 6.

The shadows still hung over the sleeping city of Jerusalem, but from the plateau of Mount Moriah the marble walls and gilded towers of the great temple of Herod rose, one above another, through the morning mists, "like a mountain of gold and snow."

Within the temple enclosure, removed by porch and court and cloister to a sacred seclusion, the vast court of the priests lay silent and dark save for the dull red glow from the embers on the great central altar. Mysterious gleams, reflections of this dusky radiance, glittered here and there from the polished pillars of marble and the burnished metal of the mighty gates, enriching while they enhanced the bewildering dimness.

The gloom of the great court was pierced at a point midway the length of it by a shaft of fitful yellow light, proceeding from the open portal of a lofty chamber, the Hall of Polished Stones. This light was given by flaring torches held in the hands of fifty men who, clothed from head to foot in gleaming white linen, stood in a great circle immovable, in absolute silence, as if awaiting a word or sign of command. At the outer pillared entrance of the hall, through which the gray dawn light was now stealing, stood a white-robed figure, weird and spectral, with face upturned and eyes uplifted, in the attitude of one eagerly listening.

An expectant hush rested upon the attendant priests—for these men were of the priesthood—until a clear voice rang down from some unseen pinnacle of the temple far above :

“The morning shineth !”

Still the priests stood motionless, while the watcher at the outer entrance called back :

“Is the sky lit up as far as Hebron ?”

“Yea, even unto Hebron,” came the answer.

“To your ministry, O priests !” cried the watchman, and instantly the waiting company became animated, as each member of it hastened to the performance of his own particular office for the day in the most magnificent ritual which the world has ever seen.

From a chamber at the northern extreme of the great court a lamb was led out, water was brought to it in a golden bowl, and the torches were held above it to permit a final examination. Finding the innocent creature perfect, without spot or blemish, the sacrificing priest led it, dumb and unresisting, bound its feet, and laid it on the north side of the great altar with its face turned to the west.

Meanwhile the keys to all the great temple gates had been given out and one after another they swung open; four to the north and four to the south; Nicanor, the entrance to the court of the women, and lastly the eastern, the Beautiful Gate, which formed the chief entrance to the temple, opening upon the court of the Gentiles. Above this gate, which was of dazzling Corinthian brass most richly chased, and so massive that it required the combined strength of twenty of the priests to open it, there hung—to the shame and sorrow of the nation—the image, in pure gold, of the Roman eagle, placed there by Herod to prove his subservience to Cæsar.

At the signal that the last gate had been opened, a company of the priests hastened through this gate to the porch called Solomon's, and blew three blasts upon their silver trumpets, loud and long, announcing to the city that the morning sacrifice was now ready to be offered.

Behind the priests, who stood at the altar within the great court, ready when the time should come to kill the helpless lamb, rose the golden-roofed sanctuary itself, approached by a semi-circular flight of twelve broad, shallow steps, at the top of which hung a magnificent curtain, concealing the temple porch with its dedicated gifts, and the entrance to the Holy Place. This entrance was formed by vast two-leaved doors plated with beaten gold, above which hung the great golden vine, symbolic of Israel, with leaves and clusters of grapes, "each cluster the height of a man."

At the blast of the silver trumpets these glittering doors, which gave admission to the Holy Place, swung open, revealing the interior even to the mystic veil which separated this from the Most Holy Place—a veil of matchless texture and rich in beauty of purple and scarlet. This was the sign to the waiting priests that the moment for sacrifice was come, and while this office was performed, other priests entered the Holy Place to cleanse the golden incense altar, and to trim and refill the lamps. The most solemn and significant part of the ritual was about to take place, the burning of the incense offering in token of the acceptance by Jehovah of the prayers of his people.

The priests, returning now from their several tasks, gathered again in the Hall of Polished

Stones for their own hour of worship, while without, in the court of Israel, the people were gathering in great numbers, coming up from their homes to have part in the morning sacrifice.

In deep humility the priests prostrated themselves together and joined in the prayer, beginning, "With great love hast thou loved us, O Lord our God, and with much overflowing pity hast thou pitied us. . . Cause our hearts to cleave to thy commandments, unite our hearts to love and fear thy name, and we shall not be put to shame, world without end."

At the close of this prayer the whole company rose and recited in full harmonious concert the "Shema":

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord;

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," etc.

While the lot was cast to determine which priest among the fifty present was to be chosen for the highest mediatorial act, that of burning the incense, a peculiar intensity of eagerness could be read upon all faces. A priest might know this high privilege but once, and to the one thus chosen this became the supreme honor of a lifetime. No wonder that those grave, earnest faces were kindled by a light of desire at such a moment, too strong to be wholly repressed.

Among the number, many of whom were young, and all of whom were men of perfect physical proportion, stood one older than the others, a man of at least sixty years, but of noble stature and presence. His flowing beard and hair were snowy white, but his eyes were clear and undimmed, and upon his countenance was the stamp of an exalted spirit. More profoundly than any of the attending priests that morning had he entered into the solemn service, and had gone about his tasks with a noble humility which distinguished him from his brethren.

Now as they stood expectant while the lot was cast, this man, whose name was Zacharias, watched and waited with a pathetic wistfulness in his eyes which told of hope long deferred and patient humiliation; for never yet, through the many years that he had ministered in the temple according to the order of his course, had Zacharias been chosen for the offering of incense in the Holy Place. What, he sometimes wondered in his heart, did this signify? He had striven all his life to walk in the commandments of the Lord, blameless; and now he was old, and the end must soon come, and he should be gathered to his fathers with this mark of the divine favor ungranted, and the longing of his heart for the close approach to the presence of Jehovah unfulfilled. And did it not accord with

the tenor of his life that it should be so? Was there not a yet deeper longing unfulfilled, a dearer hope long since buried past recall? This sorrow of a childless age, beyond words to utter, was seldom absent from the thoughts of Zacharias, but this morning as he watched the presiding priest while he cast the lot, the consciousness of it surged over him like an overwhelming wave of bitterness, and he cried out in his heart in the words of one of old :

“ He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone ; and my hope hath he removed like a tree.”

But even with the rush of grief there came a strange peace as the soul fled for refuge to its unshaken faith in Jehovah. Then suddenly he was aware, with a thrill of joyful wonder, that in very deed the lot had fallen upon him, even upon him, who had but now believed himself passed over and rejected. The hour had come at last ; he was not forgotten ! The God of Israel was gracious.

His brethren, looking upon him, saw a change indescribable in his face, as he beckoned from out the company two priests to attend him, and with them passed out into the great court, while the pealing tones of the great magrephah rang throughout the temple precincts, calling to the assembled people to prepare for what was to follow.

Slowly Zacharias passed beyond the great altar

and up the steps, attended by his assistants. The heavy curtain was pushed aside, and the three entered the porch where they were met by the two priests previously sent to prepare and cleanse the Holy Place, who, worshipping, withdrew. The first assistant now spread the live coals brought from the altar of burnt offering, over the entire surface of the golden altar, the second prepared the incense and handed the golden censer to Zacharias who was then left alone. Within the narrow limits of the Holy Place stood the objects of Israel's profound veneration. On the right was the seven-branched golden candlestick, the mystic, ever-burning light of which suffused the chamber; on the left the table of shewbread; while the altar of incense stood opposite the entrance close against the veil.

As the footfalls of the retiring priests died away and every sound was hushed, Zacharias advanced to the altar, and there spreading the incense upon the burning coals, poured out his soul in adoring prayer and praise as the one chosen to bear Israel up on his own spirit to the very presence of the Ineffable.

Suddenly, in the midst of his rapture of worship, he was aware that he was not alone, and in amazement and even terror he perceived a presence, a form unlike any he had known, drawing near

him, at the right side of the altar. Falling prostrate at the feet of his glorious visitor, Zacharias trembled and was sorely troubled, until a gracious voice which seemed rather an influence than an audible voice, bade him fear not; and there was given to him a promise that the hope which he had thought buried beyond recall, was yet to be fulfilled, for he was to have a son in whose birth many should rejoice, who should go before the Anointed One and make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Marveling beyond words at what he feared was impossible, Zacharias pleaded with the presence for some sign whereby he could believe so great a wonder, whereupon in gentle admonition to his faltering faith he was told that he should himself be speechless until all was fulfilled; and again he found himself alone.

Meanwhile, in the outer courts the people knelt long in silent prayer while the smoke of the incense like the prayers of the saints, ascended from the Holy Place. The moments passed; the prescribed time for the service was over; still the celebrant priest did not return and still the people, wondering, waited. Then, at last, the tapestry was drawn aside by a hand that trembled, and the people beheld the venerable priest, but so altered was his countenance that they asked themselves whether

it were indeed Zacharias or another. White and awestruck, with dilated eyes which seemed not to see, and lips which moved strangely, he came forward and extended his trembling arms toward the waiting congregation. Again and again he essayed to pronounce the words of benediction, but no sound proceeded from his lips.

Thrilled by the mysterious change which had come upon the beloved priest—for Zacharias was of honorable family and held in high esteem among all—the congregation became deeply stirred, and men turning with knitted brows to each other, murmured questions as to what this might mean, while in the court beyond, where the women and children waited, there was restless and eager curiosity on every side. Even the priests partook of the sudden excitement, and a tumult seemed likely to take place, when Zacharias, with a gesture of his right arm, commanded the attention of the people although without a word.

No longer trembling and agitated, his form drawn to its full height was instinct with power, and a strange joy and peace seemed to shine through his face like a visible benediction. With a solemn gesture he lifted one hand high above his head, pointing upward until all eyes were riveted upon that uplifted hand, and all people held their breath. Then with both hands he made an authoritative

motion of dismissal, and in silent awe the great company of worshipers turned away and passed out into the porches of the temple, where they stood about in groups to discuss what this strange thing might mean which was come to pass.

CHAPTER II

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.—*Romans*.

For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number; his teeth are the teeth of a lion.—*Joel*.

AMONG the men who passed out latest through the magnificent gate Nicanor into the court of the women, was a ruler, a man of middle age, the fine texture of whose garments bespoke his prosperity, and the dignity of whose bearing and countenance revealed his position as one of consequence. Although a Pharisee, the appearance of this man was equally free from the overbearing pretension or the sanctimonious assumption of piety so generally associated with the party then dominant in Jerusalem. His face was marked by lofty earnestness and the abstraction of intense thought and his eyes had a peculiarly penetrating quality in their glance.

As he descended the steps between the ranks of the white-robed chorus of Levites, he felt a hand laid upon his arm, and turning saw a man some years younger than himself, of slender, even delicate frame and somewhat melancholy face, which at the moment was singularly pale.

“ Ah, my Nicodemus ! ” exclaimed the ruler in a full, harmonious voice, which suited well with his vigorous personality, “ what sayest thou ? We have seen strange things to-day. What thinkest thou befell our worthy Zacharias that his countenance was so altered and his power of speech restrained ? ”

“ Nay, Ithamar, ” returned the other, “ thou hast thought already what I dare not trust myself to utter. If a vision hath appeared at the time of the incense offering, should it not mean that Jehovah hath of a truth heard the prayers of his people ? ” and as he spoke the voice of the younger man trembled with excitement.

“ And if he hear, shall he not answer ? ” the other added, taking up the word and speaking with the power of deep conviction ; “ and if he answer, ” and his voice dropped to a lower key, “ shall he not rend the heavens and come down and strike off the yoke of Israel, the double yoke under which we cower like dumb cattle, we the chosen of God ? ”

“ Speak not too boldly, Ithamar, ” whispered his friend, “ for Herod hath his underlings everywhere and no man’s life is safe. ”

“ Nay, nor worth saving, I could almost say, in these shameful times, ” said the other, with a darkened countenance ; but the cloud lifted suddenly as he exclaimed : “ There is Rhoda yonder and the

little maid! I had forgotten that they waited still.”

Then the two advanced to the great portal of the Beautiful Gate where, looking out upon the restless multitude which thronged the court of the Gentiles, stood a woman, who turned as they approached and greeted them with the words :

“Surely my lord hath greatly delayed his coming.”

Her voice was joyous, and as she lifted one arm to draw aside her veil, its ivory whiteness and her arch smile revealed the presence of a beautiful and gracious woman. Beside her stood a dark-eyed little maiden of ten years, whose resemblance to Ithamar was unmistakable.

“Knowest thou not, my child, that something hath befallen the good priest Zacharias which causeth us greatly to wonder, and hath carried our thoughts beyond the present hour?”

Ithamar asked the question looking down into the face of his wife with a smile which was gravely sweet.

“In truth I heard strange things spoken of by the people who passed me, as that Zacharias—I remember him well, Ithamar, and he is an upright man—came speechless from the Holy Place, and made a sign that he had seen a vision. Is it so? Did they speak truly?”

The little group eagerly talking now crossed the great open court of the Gentiles, with its busy buying and selling, its stalls for the sacrificial oxen and sheep, and the many tables where the temple shekel was given out in exchange for the common coin of the people, and passing through the colonnade known as Solomon's Porch, they proceeded to the royal bridge which, with its single mighty arch, spanned the deep chasm of the Tyropœon. Here they paused, and while Martha, the young daughter of Ithamar and Rhoda, leaned on the massive breastwork of the bridge that she might catch dizzying glimpses of the depth below, which both frightened and fascinated her, her parents and Nicodemus paused to enjoy the matchless prospect of the city spread out before them.

Beyond the bridge to the west, rose Mount Zion, the city of palaces; first in order, and directly confronting the temple, stood the Hippodrome, enlarged and beautified by Herod for the celebration of the heathen games; near by was the palace of the Maccabees; while beyond this were the vast enclosures of the Xystos, or public hall, the council chamber, the palace of the high priest, and still above rose terrace upon terrace, occupied by the mansions of the wealthy citizens. It was on one of these terraces that the house of Ithamar was situated.

To the west of this quarter of the city, its towers and battlements sharply defined against the morning sky, stood the palace of Herod, almost a city in itself. With a frown, Ithamar turned and looked backward at Mount Moriah and the magnificent pile of the temple, the pride and glory of the holy city, guarded on the north by the fortress Antonia, and thrown into startling relief against the purple slopes of Olivet rising to the east, just beyond the narrow Kedron Valley.

But impressive and beautiful as it was, the sight brought a pang to these three as the sunlight flashed back to them in unendurable brightness from the great golden eagle above the Beautiful Gate, to the Jew an idolatrous emblem and one which told of a vassal king and a conquered people. In silence they continued their walk until the home of Ithamar, on its beautiful terrace, was reached, and they entered the seclusion of its spacious court, when the conversation was resumed.

“Whither, my friend,” exclaimed Ithamar, addressing Nicodemus, his thoughts still lingering on the splendor and shame of the temple, “whither shall we look and not be reminded that the son of Esau hath his foot on the neck of Jacob, and that the king himself trembles under a tyranny heavier than his own? Alas, for our nation and our fair land! The glory hath departed from Judah!”

"But surely, my husband," said Rhoda cheerfully, "no temple, not even that of Solomon, was ever so glorious as ours—it almost blinds the eye by its splendor; and we cannot deny that Herod hath done this for our people."

"And is it not something, Ithamar," added Nicodemus, "that the son of Esau is at least a worshiper of the God of Jacob, and that we have not to bow before a heathen prince?"

"Are you indeed so blinded as to believe——" Ithamar began with flashing eye and impatient utterance, but was restrained by the uplifted hand and warning look of his friend, who feared some listening servant.

"Thou art right," Nicodemus; it is a hopeless theme and one over which we break our hearts in vain."

"Say not so, my husband," interposed Rhoda gently, looking up into her husband's face; "have you not perchance even now in the temple seen the signs that God hath visited his own? Think of it, how much it may mean! Never yet in the temple of Herod, with all its splendor of marble and gold, and all the never-ending course of our sacrifices, hath Jehovah manifested himself, by angel or voice or vision. The Holy of Holies," and her voice sank to a mournful whisper, "is empty. The Shekinah is fled. No prophet speaks to us,

for since the fathers fell on sleep all things remain as they were, even unto this day."

"Yea," murmured Nicodemus sadly, "and where is the promise of *His* coming?"

"Who knows?" began Rhoda, half under her breath, and stopped as if a sudden thought had overpowered her. Her veil had fallen about her shoulders, leaving exposed the beautiful head set proudly upon a white, full throat and crowned by heavy braids of brown hair. Her eyes were full of brilliant light, a deep color glowed in her cheeks, and her face was radiant with life and hope.

Ithamar watched her with unspeakable tenderness in his eyes, and laid one hand gently upon her shoulder; their looks met, and the same inspiration of hope flashed out in his, and each knew without words what was in the other's thought.

Nicodemus regarded the noble pair with ardent sympathy which transformed his pale and melancholy face; and a silence fell upon them all, which was yet alive with quickened feeling.

CHAPTER III

For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.—*Amos*.

THE history of the Jewish nation and the position which it held among the nations of the world in the years closely preceding the Christian era, was briefly as follows :

Two hundred years after the return of the Jews from Babylon under Zerubbabel, an account of which we find in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Palestine came under Greek dominion in consequence of the conquest of Persia and its provinces by Alexander the Great. After falling successively into the hands of Greece, Egypt, and Syria, in the year 170 B. C., the Jews became subject to the Syrian, Antiochus Epiphanes, who sought, by persistent and unrelenting cruelties, to stamp out their religion and force upon the nation, which at a fearful cost had learned to loathe idolatry, the worship of the gods of Greece. The temple was desecrated by the sacrifice of swine on the altar ; its treasures were carried away to Antioch, and the religion of Jehovah was well-nigh destroyed.

At this, the lowest ebb in the nation's history, there broke forth the marvelous uprising of the heroic Asmonæan family, better known as the Maccabees. Mattathias and his five valiant sons sprang from the lethargy of darkness and despair which lay upon the enfeebled nation and struck mighty blows for freedom. The Syrians, led by their ablest generals, were defeated by Judas the Maccabean, "the Hammer of God," in a contest not less memorable nor less heroic than that of Thermopylæ. The temple was reconsecrated, and Antiochus V. granted to the Jews the right—to be preserved forever thereafter—of worshipping their own God in their own way.

New life and new prosperity returned to Israel, and a dream of the theocracy of early days was revived, only to be rudely broken. An appeal to the rising power of Rome for help against the Syrian, made by Judas in the time of his supremacy seemed, at the first, a wise measure; but it introduced a new factor in the strife, destined to overpower all others and to be in the end the destruction of the nation.

In the year B. C. 63 Pompey, the Roman general, laid siege to Jerusalem and took it without striking a blow. The priests were found at their altars conducting the temple service, fearless and unmoved, and an awful massacre took place, in

which two thousand perished and the sanctity of the temple was again violated by the Roman soldiery. Mention is made of the surprise of Pompey, when on himself entering the Holy of Holies, so sacredly guarded and secluded that he expected to behold some imposing mystery, he found it empty; for the second temple wanted the chief glory of the first, as also did the third, built by Herod; the ark and the mercy seat, the Shekinah, or visible glory, and the holy fire on the altars were not there.

About forty years before the siege of Jerusalem under Pompey, the eastern country, Edom or Idumea, had been conquered by the Asmonæan prince, John Hyrcanus, and its people converted to Judaism in a superficial political sense. From this time the Idumeans, who were the descendants of Esau, played a marked and sinister part in the failing fortunes of the house of Israel.

The first of these half-heathen chieftains to come into prominence was Antipater, a crafty schemer who contrived to bring himself prominently before the notice of Pompey, and after the overthrow of this general by Julius Cæsar, succeeded in remaining in favor with the power of Rome, and was by Cæsar appointed procurator of Judea, while his son, Herod, was elevated at the age of twenty-five to the governorship of Galilee.

The name of Herod throws a dark shadow across every page on which it is written, and has become the synonym for cruelty and craft. But few years were required to elevate him to the place of his father, who had been poisoned, and to change Judea from a province to a tributary kingdom over which Herod was declared king by the Roman senate.

The Asmonæan or Maccabean family still stood for all of native power and glory which was left to the Jewish people, and Herod strove to strengthen his interests by marrying the beautiful Asmonæan princess, Mariamne. His passionate love for her seems to have been the one sincere affection of his life; but even this was so tainted by his brutal suspicion and cruelty that after many years he caused her to be executed, after having basely put to death her grandfather Hyrcanus, and her brother, whom he had made high priest at the age of seventeen.

The relation of Herod I. to the Jewish religion was singularly composed of superstition, policy, and cunning. To a certain degree he respected and obeyed the claims of the Mosaic law, and he strove to impress the people with a belief in his sincerity as a Jew. In reality he was a pagan at heart, but he saw in the noble system of the Hebrew faith and in the imposing ceremonial of the

temple a powerful machine for the building up of an independent kingdom. He cringed in crafty servility before the power of Rome, because he regarded its protection as a temporary necessity to his purpose, and to this end built temples in various places for the worship of Cæsar and of Apollo; but with sleepless diligence he sought to build up and consolidate an independent State.

Reduced as it was to a political instrument, religion had lost its vital energy, and magnificent as was the temple recently completed by Herod, its glory was false and fleeting and destined to speedy overthrow. The high-priesthood had been degraded from its noble eminence and made a toy in the hands of the king, given now to one and now to another of his parasites.

The ruling passion of Herod was jealousy—a jealousy so violent and so unscrupulous that no consideration, human or divine, could stand before it. In swift succession he had caused the cowardly murder of every member of his own family in whom he feared ambitions which might cross his own, not even sparing the two sons of his adored Mariamne; and the people had become almost stupefied by the frequency of his deeds of blood. “So long as he lived no woman’s honor was safe, no man’s life was secure. An army of all-powerful spies invaded Jerusalem—nay, the king himself

was said to stoop to that office." In fine, the Jewish nation bowed in sullen, helpless subjection before a tyrant whose very name they loathed.

The heir presumptive to the throne of Judea, a vital question, as Herod was now old and struggling with a slow but mortal disease, was his son Antipater. Two other sons were waiting to be enriched by his death—Archelaus and Philip. Small chance there seemed that the nation could escape from the rule of some member of the hated Herodian family, but rebellion and revolution were in the air, and Jerusalem was full of plots and counterplots.

It can now readily be understood that among the devout and thoughtful Jews were men, such as Ithamar and Nicodemus, who still clung with firm faith to the promises of God through their prophets, who remembered the glorious redemption from the bondage of Egypt and the comparatively recent freedom won for them by the Maccabees; and among whom there was springing up a new hope of a deliverer, even the Promised One, the Messiah. With trembling but eager enthusiasm their thoughts and imaginations pictured him a prince, riding forth conquering and to conquer, kindling the sluggish people by his courage, and leading victorious armies who should crush the malignant tyranny of the house of Herod to

powder, and should cast off the yet more awful power of Rome, which hung over them vast and relentless, like impending doom.

Men like Ithamar could be found in the higher ranks of the Pharisees who, from having cried out for years, "How long, O Lord, how long?" had now awakened to the conviction that endurance had reached its limit and that the time for redemption must be drawing nigh.

There were also in Jerusalem at this time certain rabbis of great popularity, men of personal magnetism and great intellectual eminence, Judas and Matthias by name. These men had become leaders of thought among the nobler Pharisees, and around them and their teachings was fast growing up, although thus far in secret, a revolutionary party, whose watchword was, "Destruction to the house of Herod and defiance to the Heathen," and whose hope was, the Root of David, the Royal Deliverer.

Among the people at large, however, religion had become a dry and empty thing.

The temple ritual, with its famous feasts and its impressive sacrifices, was sustained with scrupulous fidelity in form but with little inward devotion. The synagogue, or, as it might be called, the parish church, represented far more of the real religion of the people, with the informal simplicity of its

service. These synagogues were found in every village of the land, in Galilee not less than in Judea; while in Jerusalem alone, with its population of less than fifty thousand, there were more than four hundred of them. Schools of religious teaching were hardly less abundant.

Jerusalem was at this time divided between two great parties. The party of the Pharisees embraced at once the religious and the patriotic men of the time. This sect, for such it was, stood for *separateness*. The superiority and exclusiveness of the Hebrew nation was its animating principle, and intolerance its vital breath; its practical working was the endless elaboration of ceremonial law, of external rites and observances, and, through the scribes, who in general belonged to the Pharisaic party, of careful copying and interpretation of Scripture. But by degrees the "traditions of the elders," that is, the opinions of famous rabbis of earlier generations, had grown to assume an importance greater than the Scriptures themselves, and vital, personal religion, faith in God and love toward men, were lost and buried under a mountain of trivial, meaningless exaction and ceremony. This was the burden which became too great for men to bear.

The Pharisees represented the upper middle class of society. The aristocrats of the day were

the Sadducees, closely allied to the families of the priests, and strongly antagonistic to the Pharisees, whose bigotry and scruples they ridiculed, as well as their fanatical patriotism. Cold-hearted, selfish, and worldly, they imitated the culture and luxury of the Greeks, and denied the hope of a life hereafter, and the existence of angel or spirit. The Sadducees were little known out of Jerusalem, but the Pharisees were influential throughout the land, and exercised a power over the country folk of Galilee hardly less than in the concentrated life of the large cities.

Beneath these two parties, who comprised the better elements of Jewish society, were the masses of the common people; and lowest of all, being closely associated with outcasts and "sinners," were the publicans or tax gatherers, who were regarded, alike by Pharisee and Sadducee, as unworthy of consideration.

Such, in brief, were the social and political conditions of Palestine in the year 6 B. C.

CHAPTER IV

But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.—*Malachi*.

FIVE months have passed since the morning when Zacharias the priest was met at the altar of incense by the angelic presence, and we must look for the venerable man in his own home amid the vine-clad hills south of Hebron, where he has passed the intervening months in strange, eloquent silence.

It is a calm and peaceful evening of early spring ; the air is laden with the odor of the blossoming vines ; the last rays of sunset light are gilding the crested hill of Hebron a few miles to the north, and purple shadows soften the valley which lies between that ancient city and the little hill town of Juttah where Zacharias dwells, with others of the priestly tribe. On a broad terrace at the foot of a luxuriant garden, surrounded on its outer edge by a gray and moss-grown balustrade of stone, sits the priest, and near him his wife Elisabeth, a slender, graceful woman, whose face, although she is no longer young, bears the refinement and distinction of noble family and high spiritual endowment.

Unlike her husband's, her hair is not touched by the hand of time, but falls in dark waves along her face, and is bound with jeweled bands into a knot high on her head, from which a veil hangs lightly, more as drapery to-night than as protection, softening the outline of face and throat by its light folds.

Zacharias, in whose eyes there is something of the wistfulness which belongs to those to whom speech has been denied, watches the face of Elisabeth with tender admiration. Never was so noble a woman, he is thinking, nor one so worthy to be chosen for the miraculous gift promised him by the angel. How beautiful she is to-night! How young and sweet her face, with this new happiness upon it, and the light of a love untold and mysterious in her eyes!

The wife, feeling the look which rests upon her face, lifts her eyes to his, full of sympathy and yearning. Rising from the low divan, on which she has been resting, she steps to her husband's side, and laying one white hand upon his head places the other in his with a touch and caress which tell better than words the secret thoughts of her heart.

It is a moment of profound and exquisite feeling as the two, so long united, so long tested by a great trial, commune together thus in silence on the great gift of God which has turned for them

their sorrow into joy. Happy tears fill the eyes of Elisabeth, while those of her husband are closed as his heart is lifted in prayer and thanksgiving.

In the dusky garden behind them the evening breeze steals through the pomegranate trees, rich with their blood-red blossoms, and wafts to them the fragrance of the amaryllis and the rose.

But there is another sound besides the rustling of the leaves. Is not that a light step upon the garden walk? Who is coming down between the rows of tall white lilies? Elisabeth, turning, sees a figure as white as they, advancing through the shadows, and for an instant her heart stops its pulsation as she thinks it may be again God's angel coming to them.

But no; the advancing form is not that of angel or spirit. It is a girlish shape, slight and tall, clad in white, with unveiled head from which hang braids of fair hair. She comes toward Zacharias and Elisabeth with hands outstretched, and upon the lovely face is a softer radiance than the beams of the setting sun. The dark eyes are large and luminous; the lips are parted in a smile of greeting; upon the white forehead a heavenly purity seems to rest like an invisible crown, and to invest the whole maidenly appearance with something of celestial light. Simple and almost childlike as is the bearing of the young girl, and familiarly as

Elisabeth knows her, there is yet about her a new and nameless majesty which awes her friends and restrains them from their wonted unreserved greeting.

But there is no like restraint upon their young visitor, for having drawn near and kissed the hand of Zacharias with gentle reverence, and embraced her kinswoman Elisabeth, she salutes them both with the usual words :

“Peace be unto you, and peace be unto this house.”

With the sound of Mary's voice a change flashes over the countenance of Elisabeth, a sudden prophetic inspiration illuminates her, and in wondering amazement Zacharias perceives that she is filled by the divine influence, as she says in a loud, clear voice :

“Blessed art thou among women, and blessed He that shall be born of thee !” As she speaks Elisabeth takes the hands of the fair girl in hers, but suddenly dropping upon her knees and pressing her forehead against the hands of Mary, she exclaims humbly : “But why is this great honor vouchsafed to me, unworthy, that the mother of my Lord should come to me ?”

Zacharias, amazed beyond measure at this salutation, looks on while Mary, who has grown white at the words of her cousin, raises her from the

grass where she kneels and encircles her with loving arms.

For a moment the two, the noble matron and the spotless virgin, stand thus looking with searching, solemn gaze into each other's eyes ; then drawing back a step, Mary stretches out her clasped hands before her, and with uplifted eyes and shining face breaks out into a low, chanted song, beginning with the words :

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour;
For he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaiden:
For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me
blessed.

The last words of Mary's song die away into silence ; the last rays of the sun fade from Hebron's crest, and the twilight is deepening into darkness. The hour of prophetic exaltation is over. Unnerved after the strong excitement which had been upon her, and worn by the long journey which she has accomplished alone from distant Galilee, the young girl throws herself weeping into Elisabeth's arms, and when she can speak through her tears it is to murmur with quivering lip :

“ But after all, what am I but a little child ? ”

Soothing her as if she were indeed her own little child, Elisabeth leads her back through the garden

to the house, from the porch of which lights were now streaming.

Following them, with head devoutly bent, the venerable priest gives thanks, albeit with silent lips, the voice of his heart saying :

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us,
In the house of his servant David.

When the vines, which that night gave forth the sweetness of their blossoms, hung laden with the ripeness of purple clusters, there came a day when Zacharias, taking in his arms John, his first-born son, divinely given and divinely named, broke the seal of silence, and poured forth his joy and exultation with a loud voice in the same words. Then was it given to him to see clearly that his son was to be the herald of the Highest, the son of Mary yet unborn, going before him to prepare his ways ; and it was given him to rejoice in the tender mercy of his God whereby the Dayspring from on high had come to visit men, to give light to them in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace.

When that day came the maiden, Mary, had returned, strong in God and of good comfort, to her own house, far north, in Nazareth.

CHAPTER V

I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.—*Zechariah*.

ON a night of midsummer, after a day of fervid heat had spent its fires and was dying in dark red and gold over the western horizon, the family of Ithamar sat together in the garden on the roof of their spacious dwelling, looking off upon the city and enjoying the cooler air.

Within the enclosure of the marble railing, lined with jars of blossoming plants, of branching palms and brilliant cacti, lay costly rugs and couches; large bowls of silver and porcelain held cooling drinks; servants passed noiselessly to and fro with fans which they moved in slow, monotonous measure; while here and there from a shining brass column depended a graceful lamp in which burned perfumed oil, giving forth both light and fragrance. Over all arched the dome of the sky, bare of cloud to its "blue, profoundest height," but studded more and more thickly in the deepening darkness with the splendid constellations of the East.

The mother, Rhoda, languid with the heat of the day, was reclining upon a divan, while leaning

against her, with head thrown back upon the pillows, was a boy of seven or eight years. His small hand rested lightly in hers and now and then she would raise it to her lips while with each new caress a half-unconscious smile of pure happiness would pass over the face of the little fellow.

Behind the divan a maid-servant paced slowly to and fro, bearing in her arms an infant to whom she was chanting low a murmurous lullaby. Martha, the dark-eyed daughter, sat on a rug near Ithamar, her father, who, lost in intense thought, was looking off beyond the city and the temple towers to the darkly looming outline of Olivet. Martha's place was under the light of a lamp and her slender hands were busy with a needle.

"Bring the little one hither, Anna," Rhoda said gently, turning from the boy at her side to speak to the nurse. "Is she sleeping yet?"

Without speaking Anna turned from her slow pacing and coming to Rhoda's couch, knelt by her side that she might see the face of her sleeping babe.

"Ah, how sweet she is," murmured the mother fondly; "the dear little happy face! Sawest thou ever, Anna, child of mine or of any mother with such a look of peace and sweetness before it had yet known three months of life?"

"Nay, my mistress," responded the faithful nurse,

who had cared for all the children of Ithamar and Rhoda, and who loved them as her own.

“Martha was of a restless nature, I remember,” said the mother smiling, as if the thought amused her.

“Yes, she was ever eager and watchful,” returned Anna; “but lovely too, she was, the finest child of the three for beauty.”

“Yes, and bright as a star,” rejoined Rhoda proudly; “and her brother had from the first the fine forehead and thoughtful look that betoken a scholar by-and-by,” and she patted the boy’s cheek lovingly. “But, Anna, for pure sweetness of spirit we shall always have to go to this blessed little Mary,” and she kissed the baby’s forehead lightly and bade the nurse take her to the room below.

“Mother, of what is it that my father is always thinking in these days, that he does not care for us and talk with us as he used, but sits ever with that look that he has now?” It was the little lad who spoke, when Anna had departed.

Rhoda’s bright face clouded, as she glanced across at Ithamar.

“Ah, my Lazarus,” she whispered, “thy father hath troublesome matters that he broods over, and hard to disentangle. Thy head is yet too young to think upon them, and I would not that thy heart

should be too early burdened with these cares. The time will come all too soon," and she sighed deeply.

"I know that my father hates the wicked king, for he is evil and cruel and puts good men to death, and I hate him too!" and the boy's cheek flushed hotly and he clenched his small hands.

His mother smiled, but there was more sadness than mirth in the smile.

"Hush, my son," she said in a low voice, "I would not that the servants should hear thee speak thus; but in truth it is no sin to hate the king, who is no king of our nation, but a low-born usurper, a coarse and brutal heathen, who offers sacrifice to Apollo while yet he pretends to worship Jehovah."

As she spoke the eyes of Rhoda flashed with indignation and her lips curled in scorn.

"Why should we have so base a king?" asked Lazarus, thoughtfully. "Have we no rightful king?"

"We had a king, my son," replied Rhoda, "Antigonus, of the royal Asmonæan family; but that was over thirty years ago. His niece, Mariamne, was the most noble and beautiful woman, they say, ever seen in Jerusalem. Herod killed our king, Antigonus, and married Mariamne."

Rhoda spoke with a brevity which showed how

distasteful to her was every mention of the hated king.

“Where is the queen, Mariamne, now, my mother? I have never seen her,” questioned the lad.

“She too was cruelly killed by her husband—yes, my Lazarus—and her two princely sons, as beautiful and as bright as their mother, after they had been sent to Rome and educated as princes should be, were treacherously enticed to Sebaste, that is on the sea near to Cæsarea, and strangled,” here Rhoda’s voice sank to a whisper, “to death.”

The boy’s face grew white and rigid as he listened with checked breath.

“And who shall be our king when Herod dies?” he asked after a pause, “for I do not think our Lord God will let such a cruel man live always.”

“Oh, he has sons of some of his other wives,” replied Rhoda scornfully, “women as low born and bred as himself. There will not lack a son of Herod, thou mayest be sure. I suppose it will fall to Antipater,” she added rather to herself than to the child; “they say the king has so made his testament. His mother was Doris, a mere commoner’s daughter. But Herod changes his testament whenever the mood seizes him and Antipater is out of favor now. We may have a son of the

Samaritan woman to reign over us—Archelaus perhaps. It would be but one insult more to the nation.”

“But is there no one left of the royal family who might yet win the throne?” persisted Lazarus.

His mother glanced uneasily about her.

“Speak not so loudly, child,” she whispered; “this is no subject for one like thee. Nay, Herod hath destroyed them root and branch; he hath spared not the hoary head of Hyrcanus, nor the tender youth of the queen’s brother, as beautiful as an angel, men say.”

“All are gone?” the boy asked sadly.

“All. That is,” and Rhoda hesitated, speaking under her breath, “it is not known surely; Antigonus left no son, but he had sisters and there may be those in whose veins runs the pure Asmonæan blood—but—we know not——” and at this point the mother broke off and rose, evidently not wishing to pursue the subject. Crossing the floor to her husband she said:

“Didst thou not expect Joseph the councillor ere this, Ithamar?”

Her husband inclined his head in grave, abstracted silence, and even as he did so a servant at the head of the broad, marble staircase which led into the courtyard below, announced a guest. Ithamar rising went forward and saluted a tall,

powerfully built man, with a somewhat heavy and immobile face, who now advanced into the center of the lighted portion of the roof and whom he addressed as Joseph.

The new-comer was received with courteous attentions. Having come from beyond the city limits, an attendant was summoned to bathe his feet, remove his mantle, and offer him spiced wine and small cakes compounded of flour and honey. While yet he was refreshing himself, voices were heard again upon the stairs and Nicodemus, the young friend of Ithamar, was ushered into the little circle, preceded by a stately old man with a long beard and a person and manner which indicated the refinement and polish of courtly society. This was Elon, a man of high standing among the rulers of the Jews, and a chamberlain of the court of Herod.

Rhoda and her daughter now withdrew, but Lazarus, begging hard to be allowed to remain, Ithamar took the boy by the hand and looking searchingly into his eyes, demanded sternly :

“Wilt thou promise on thy sacred word faithfully to keep to thyself all that thou mayest hear, my son ?”

The boy looked up with quiet eyes, unafraid.

“Yes, my father,” he answered simply.

“Then, in the name of the Lord, remain and

learn all that thy young heart can know of the sorrows of thy people, which in a few years thou too wilt have to bear."

As he spoke Ithamar glanced from one to the other of his friends, and reading acquiescence in their looks he signed to the boy to take a place on the divan from which Rhoda had now arisen, while he invited the three new-comers to places near the parapet in the opposite portion of the roof.

There the boy lay and heard, half dreaming and half waking, the secret and solemn conference which followed.

It was two hours later when, roused by Anna who had come at the bidding of her mistress to take him to his bed, he awoke to hear the earnest voices of the four friends still in consultation. He lay long alone in his little room, struggling to decide whether he had dreamed or really heard that there was after all a young Asmonæan prince who might yet sit upon the throne of Israel.

About six months after this night Ithamar left home on a journey to the coast city of Cæsarea, and was gone several days. When he returned he brought with him a boy of the age of Lazarus, a child of striking beauty and willful, imperious ways, attended by a slave.

When Lazarus wondered at the reverence which

his parents showed to so young a child, Ithamar said: "This boy is of higher birth than thou, my son, but he is to be brought up among us as one of ourselves," and beyond this he explained nothing.

CHAPTER VI

But some said, What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?—*St. John.*

IN a narrow street of the lower city of Jerusalem there dwelt at this time an aged man who was known throughout the community for his saintly holiness of life and his wisdom. Related distantly to the family of Rhoda, he was regarded by her children with peculiar love and veneration, and the boy Lazarus had in an especial degree endeared himself to the old man, Simeon, by his gentle and thoughtful ways and the unusual spiritual perception which he manifested.

It was no uncommon thing for the boy to spend hours in the humble dwelling of Simeon, going out with him as a helpful little attendant on his trembling steps, and often accompanying him to the temple, where much of his time was passed.

It was January now, and even in the sunny land of Judea the trees were brown and sere and the skies gray. On a chill and cloudy morning the boy Lazarus, having obtained his mother's consent

and the attendance of a servant, left his home and made his way down from Mount Zion, with its sumptuous dwellings, through the crowded bazaars and noisy streets of the lower city to the home of Simeon.

Having dismissed his attendant, the boy hastened through the narrow court to the low-roofed room, where he found his old friend seated by a fire of coals in a brazier, poring over a parchment scroll. He looked up and greeted the boy affectionately.

“Come hither, my son,” he said, “and tell me if I am wrong, that thy face seems not so glad as of old, in these last days.”

Lazarus took his favorite place on a mat at the old man’s feet, and only smiled pensively and shook his head.

“Ah, well,” said his friend, “I have joy enough in my heart to fill thine too.” And the boy perceived that a new light and animation had come into the noble face of his friend.

For a little while there was silence, as Simeon seemed to be pondering some question, perhaps deliberating how far he might take the gentle child into his confidence. Finally, as if satisfied, he reached out one trembling hand, and passing it caressingly over the boy’s brown hair, began :

“Said I ever to thee, my little friend, that our

God had granted to me by his Spirit an exceeding gracious promise?"

Lazarus shook his head.

"It is even so," rejoined Simeon. "To me, for what reason I know not, the high reward hath been given that—listen Lazarus!—that I, old and near to the end of this earthly life as I now must be, shall not see death until I have seen the Lord's Christ, even the Messiah. What thinkest thou, my son? Doth not that stir thy heart?"

"Oh, Simeon!" exclaimed the ardent child. "Can it be true? thou thyself art in very surety to see the Messiah, the king of Israel?"

"Yes, even so, little son. Listen to me: I am an old man, I have lived far beyond the span of a man's life, and now what wait I for? Only for the fulfillment of the promise of his coming. I want to go, Lazarus; I am weary and worn with my earthly pilgrimage; but I have hoped and prayed through all these years for the coming in power and glory of the Deliverer who shall exalt and redeem our people, and I have received the promise of which I spoke by the Holy Spirit. When mine eyes behold him I shall be ready to depart. What thinkest thou then my soul must chiefly long for?"

Tears stood in the boy's eyes as he answered, "To see the Christ of God."

“Yea, verily; and if I mistake not, the time is at hand, the king is at the door.”

“Wherefore thinkest thou this?” asked the child timidly.

“Ah, I was forgetting to tell thee,” said the old man, smiling kindly into the uplifted childish face. “Know then that I have been, since I saw thee last, to the city of David, even unto Bethlehem, and have learned of marvelous things which have come to pass there of late.

“The town hath been greatly overcrowded for a month now, by reason of the taxing which hath brought back to it all, in every part of the land, who belong to the house and lineage of David. Dost thou understand? It was by reason of this that I went thither.”

“Yes, I have heard my father talk about the enrollment of all the people, and he thinks it unjust and wrong.”

“He thinks truly; but even the wrong-doing of men may serve the purposes of God. For see, I went thither in much weariness of body and heaviness of spirit, my Lazarus, being vexed for the grievance of my people, but I returned with great rejoicing, bringing with me good tidings.”

The eyes of Simeon kindled, and power seemed to have been infused into his bent and trembling frame.



THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

“The day after I came to Bethlehem, having performed the act of enrollment according to the decree of Augustus, I walked out beyond the tomb of Rachel, even unto the fields and pastures, to overlook the pleasant land. As I stood leaning upon my staff, there came to me from the field below, where many sheep were feeding, a shepherd, a plain man and an humble, but of a friendly countenance, who saluted me, and said :

“‘Oh, my father, hast thou heard of the great glory wherewith our God hath visited us, and hath made known even to rude shepherds, such as I and my fellows, the wonderful good tidings of great joy?’

“When I had made answer that I knew not of what he spake, the man, whose name was Amos, told me how it had come to pass, on a night not many weeks past, that while he and other shepherds were guarding the flocks which were kept for sacrifice on the hill just above where we stood, that naught might molest them by night, they were suddenly startled by one of their number who called out to them all to look up into the sky.

“The shepherd Amos then said that looking, they were aware of a strange, white light just overhead, which as they gazed grew ever brighter, until it was as if the heavens had broken up, and a glory from some upper spaces were pouring

through. Amazed they asked one another what this might mean, when behold, down through this channel of light there passed swiftly a shining form of highest majesty, so dazzling that they could not describe its appearance; but it came nearer and nearer to them, where they now lay prostrate on the earth, and the glory of it made them greatly afraid.

“Then—so said Amos—the angel spake unto them and cheered their hearts, and they were no longer afraid, for they felt that the kindness and love of our God had come nigh unto them, for the angel bade them fear not, for he brought them the tidings of great joy, that upon that very day there had been born, even in Bethlehem, the city of David, *a Saviour, Christ the Lord.*

“But this, my Lazarus, was even less marvelous than what followed, for when the angel had given them the sign that the young child should be found in the city lying in a manger, he ascended from them; but immediately there was with him a multitude of the heavenly host, so that all heaven seemed to be opened above, and they all sang together. The song, so said Amos, was glorious beyond words to utter, so that they wist not any longer whether they were on the earth or in heaven, and these words only could they understand:

“Glory to God in the highest,
And upon earth peace—
Good will toward men.”

“Oh, my father,” said Lazarus, who had held his breath in ecstatic wonder, “how great, how glorious it must have been! And was that all?”

“All of the visible glory, my son,” said Simeon musingly; “but the greater glory is yet to be revealed. The angels went out of their sight, and the sky was as it had been before, and the flocks lay sleeping in the grass around them.”

“What did they do then, the shepherds?”

“They looked at one another and wept for joy and wonder, and they said, ‘Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which the Lord hath made known to us.’”

“And did they find the babe?” asked Lazarus in a low, awestruck voice.

“Yea, even as the angels had told them. They went first to the inn, and all was still and sleeping there, but in the stall they heard voices and saw a light.”

“In a stall!” exclaimed Lazarus amazed.

“Yea, verily, for the inn was over full that night, and the latest comers had been given the stalls for their lodgment. On seeing the light the shepherds hastened to the entrance, and there they were met by a man of grave and worthy aspect,

who asked them what they sought. When they told him of the song of the angels, he led them in, and they saw a young mother of fair and holy face, and near her, even in a manger made soft with hay, there lay the child, wrapped like other new-born babes and sleeping quietly."

"Was it like other children, said the man, Simeon?"

"Yes, weak and helpless, and closer to God than to men, my Lazarus, as all new-born babes are, I think. Only, they knew when they saw the face of that mother (her name is Mary, and she had come all the way from Nazareth, far north in Galilee, on account of the taxing, with Joseph, her husband) they knew, my child, that it was not to them alone that God had manifested his glory."

"Said they aught to the mother of what they had seen and heard?"

"They told her all, and she seemed not so much surprised as glad in a quiet, brooding way. Wonderful eyes, Amos said she had, which seemed to hold a light and a joy in them unlike any eyes he ever beheld, and yet they were full of deep and pondering thought. As for the child, it was plain to see that she worshiped it as if it had been in very truth a gift direct from the hand of God."

"Didst thou see the child and the mother?" asked Lazarus eagerly.

“Nay, it was not in my heart to follow and find them then. It was not the will of God for me. I hastened back to Jerusalem, hardly knowing how I came, so joyful was I, and so filled with the wondrous tidings. So now, my child, I have only a little longer to wait, for mine eyes shall soon behold the Christ of God; yea, mine eyes shall soon see him, and not another,” and Simeon fell into adoring meditation, from which the boy dared not rouse him by any question.

An hour later the old man came out into the court where Lazarus was quietly waiting, and the boy perceived in his rapt look that he had been with God.

“Come,” he said briefly, holding out his hand, “let us go to the temple.”

Immediately the boy was ready, for he had expected this summons, and they passed on their way in silence, for the child knew that his old friend was absorbed in devout contemplation into which he might not intrude.

Having entered the temple, where at this hour no formal service was taking place, as it was not a feast day nor a Sabbath, and having passed through the outer court, they entered the wide court of the women, which was empty now save for a few scattered groups of people and a Levite here and there. Just within the noble portal of the gate Nicanor,

the entrance to the court of Israel, stood the priest-in-waiting, leaning listlessly against a polished pillar.

Simeon, led with loving care by the boy Lazarus, was about crossing to the gate, when he perceived two persons, a man and a young woman, advancing from the opposite side, in the same direction. Simeon bade the boy wait, and they stood aside to watch the simple ceremony which they expected to follow, for the woman carried a young child in her arms to be presented by the priest, and the man held in his hand two doves to be offered in sacrifice.

It was a very familiar sight even to Lazarus, and one which took place hourly in the temple; nor was there anything to attract attention in the two persons who now took their places in the gate before the priest, who had advanced to meet them as he saw them approach. They were Galileans, by their simple and rustic dress; the man was already advanced in years, his hair was sprinkled with gray, and his face, although serious, bore no especial indication of refinement or intellect. He was probably a laboring man, and the poverty of the pair was shown by their sacrifice, the doves being a substitute for a lamb among the poorer classes. The woman, who was of girlish figure, was veiled and her head was bent low over her child.

A few moments sufficed for the priest to receive the five shekels prescribed for the "redemption" of a first-born child, and the doves for the purification of the young mother, and to hold the infant on outstretched arms above the altar. This being performed with no mark of unusual significance, and the child having been returned to its mother, the parents turned and descended the stairs to the court below.

But as they reached the pavement Simeon, who had watched with intense interest all which had taken place and had crossed to the foot of the stairs, met them, and to the amazement of both, took the child, gently and without a word, from its mother's arms, while the boy Lazarus stood by holding his staff and looking on with large, wondering eyes.

For a moment the saintly old man was silent, gazing earnestly down into the face of the babe, and then lifting up his eyes, he exclaimed, while a light from above irradiated his face :

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples ; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

The Galilean stood amazed, but the young wife (who was Mary of Nazareth), pushing aside her

veil, fixed her eyes steadfastly on the face of the aged Simeon and listened to his words as if they were music which she loved.

The boy, who stood unnoticed and watched her, never while he lived forgot the strange, deep sweetness of her eyes.

Words of blessing, rich and gracious, were now pronounced, but with them, in sharp, discordant contrast, the mother heard a prophecy which sounded the first note of sorrow in her hymn of praise.

What meant he, the holy man, when he said, "Yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul"?

This too she pondered in her heart as, leaving the temple, they departed from the holy city and went their way to Bethlehem.

The following day in the house of Ithamar it was told that, in the night just past, the soul of the aged Simeon had been taken to God, he having fallen asleep quietly as a little child.

CHAPTER VII

Balaam the son of Beor saith,
And the man whose eye was closed saith :
He saith, which heareth the words of God,
And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,
Which seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Falling down, and having his eyes open :
I see him, but not now :
I behold him, but not nigh :
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners of Moab,
And break down all the sons of tumult.
And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir also shall be a possession, which were his enemies.

—*Numbers.*

A WEEK passed, a week of ignoble agony in the palace, of fear and dread in the city ; for Herod in the consuming tortures of his loathsome disease, the frantic outbursts of his jealousy, and of that remorse whose spectres continually encompassed his guilty spirit, seemed thirsting for new deeds of violence. Men feared that the reign begun in blood, and bathed through all its course with blood, might close in a fresh baptism of blood. The city rested not night or day in the awful tension of its mood, for the air was alive

with rumor and suspicion. The worst elements of society were frothing to the top, and the best lay in dark and ominous silence. What new shape would Herod's insane cruelty take? What last dark record would stain yet deeper the scroll of his life, soon to be rolled together and submitted to a mightier King?

Again it was night, and again in the housetop garden of Ithamar the four friends, Joseph, Elon, Nicodemus, and their host, were gathered in secret counsel. This night no wife nor child nor servant lingered beside them; this was not the hour for social joy or refreshment. The faces of the four men were dark and troubled, they spoke in whispers, but with gestures which betokened strong excitement.

"Saidst thou, Ithamar, that thou thyself sawest these men who have turned Jerusalem upside down since yesterday?" asked the Councillor Joseph, who had come in from his great estate in the town of Arimathea, to hold consultation with his friends.

"Nay," responded Ithamar, whose face was noticeable in the little group for its proud and fearless determination, "I saw them not, although I have spoken with others who met and spoke with them, and from all I hear a like report: They were strangers of consequence, no strolling

impostors, look you, but sober men, of grave and reverend aspect."

"And all say that they were clad in goodly apparel and that their camels were richly furnished forth"—it was Nicodemus who added this word—"but travel-worn as those who come from a far country."

"But, Elon," said Ithamar, "if I mistake not, thou knowest more of these strangers than do we, and hast perhaps some key to the mystery of their appearance and their coming? This much only we know, that they rode in at the Fish Gate, coming it would seem, from the east, at about the third hour yesterday; that they asked for the houses of the chief men of the people and were directed to some of the rabbis and elders; and that of each they asked the same question which was, 'Where is he that is born to be King of the Jews?' Think, Elon, what a question at an hour like this!"

"Nay, but Ithamar," remarked Nicodemus eagerly—he was a young man and his imagination was more kindled than that of his elders—"they said more than that. Didst thou not hear how they told of a star which had appeared in the sky as a token of the birth of a great king? Truly there are strange signs and omens in these days, and to my mind they can point but to one thing, the coming in power of the Messiah!"

The other men smiled gravely, but shook their heads as if they dared not yield themselves to so wild a hope.

“Knowest thou aught more of this matter, Elon?” asked Joseph.

Elon bowed again, in grave assent.

“The thing hath come even unto the palace,” he began, “and hath been made known unto the king.”

“Sayest thou so?” cried Nicodemus with flushing cheek, while the others listened with startled attention.

“Even so, and with such effect that he hath been greatly disquieted, and his malady hath raged in fury worse even than before, so that no attendant can soothe him.”

“Fears he some rival to his throne or to the succession of his family?” asked Ithamar.

“Yes, but even more than that, he fears, my friends, a universal king, who shall build up what he hath so miserably failed to build, a powerful and a free kingdom, like that of Rome, to hold sway over all the world. That, you have known, hath been Herod’s dearest wish, his idol before which he hath sacrificed all that men hold sacred. The end is coming now; he knows it, it is not hid from him; and it is gall and wormwood to him that he dies as he has lived, a vassal king, a mere dependent upon

the favor of Cæsar, and that, of all his sons, not one can lay claim to royal blood. He thinks of the princely sons of Mariamne, strangled by his own cursed spite, and the anguish of his spirit tears him as it were in sunder."

"And well it may," murmured Ithamar between his set teeth.

"Think then," pursued Elon, "of the tortures of jealousy and fear which were aroused in him yesterday when one of the spies who had tracked these strangers and heard their errand, brought the tidings to him. Do you see what he sees? A king of the Jews announced in far lands by wonders in the heavens, may be the universal king, and who can be such but the Messiah, the Great Deliverer?"

"And cannot even his soul, in view of his own death, bow in gladness before such a one?" asked Joseph.

"Nay, my friend, thou knowest not Herod," replied Elon; "worship and noble joy are all unknown to him. Even the Messiah, to every true son of Israel the desire of his inmost heart, is to this barbarian son of Esau naught but a new cause for jealous rage."

"What did he? Have the men escaped alive out of Jerusalem?" asked Ithamar.

"Yes," returned Elon smiling slightly; "Herod

is not yet done with them. When they have served his turn he will find, it may be, a way for them into silence. His first act was to send for some of the scribes and the chief of the priests now in the city, and racked as he is with suffering, he received them himself in the council chamber and put this question to them, 'Where shall the Christ be born?'

"Shall it not be fulfilled that was spoken of the Lord by the prophet: 'And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor which shall rule my people Israel?'"

It was Ithamar who spoke.

"Thou art right. Such was the declaration of the council, and Herod accepts it. But that is not all. In the dead of night, last night, I was myself sent by the king to meet these strangers who had been led into the court of the palace, and to bring them into his own inner chamber."

Again the three listened with fresh eagerness.

"What was said between them was unheard by any other, for the king ordered a strict watch to be kept at each approach to his chamber."

"Unheard, but is it all unknown?" asked Ithamar briefly.

Again there was the slight smile and the expressive gesture on the part of the courtier.

“On their way back,” he resumed, lowering his voice still more than before, “the eldest of the three strangers, a man who might himself be a king, by the majesty of his mien, said to me privily: ‘Thy master hath made request that if we find the new-born king in a city called Bethlehem, we shall return and bring him word that he may go and worship him also; howbeit I am in doubt of his true intent.’ His eye, which was piercing, searched my face for an answer to the question he did not ask. What he read I know not; but if they are wise, those three strangers will depart to their homes another way.”

“Were they men of noble appearance, all of them?” asked Joseph.

“Yes, they had a high and a majestic aspect, although of strange countenance and apparel; rich they must be, for they have brought with them great store of gold and precious spices for gifts to the king in whose birth they so confidently believe.”

“Strange, is it not, that to strangers and to aliens there should more light be given than to the people of God?” Ithamar spoke musingly. “How said the priests and the scribes? Mean they to go to Bethlehem and inquire concerning this marvel?”

Again the expressive gesture as Elon made answer:

“Nay, my Ithamar, knowest thou not that among the priests and scribes are few who wait for the consolation of Israel? Their souls are as dry as their parchments, and if the Lord we seek should suddenly come to his temple, he would find more greed of gain, more corruption and selfishness there than in any house in Jerusalem—save the palace,” he added bitterly.

“But this child,” murmured Ithamar, lost in thought, “this babe of Bethlehem—there is the word of the prophet; there is the word of the sainted Simeon; there is the word of the strangers. What if it should be——?”

CHAPTER VIII

A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children ; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not.—*Jeremiah*.

A FEW days later, Rhoda, the wife of Ithamar, sat in the spacious inner court of their dwelling, surrounded by her children and attendants. A fountain of sparkling water plashed in a marble basin, around the edge of which grew fern-shaped palms ; luxurious divans covered with rich tapestry were placed about on the mosaic pavement of the court, around which ran a fine colonnade upholding a gallery enclosed by gracefully carved pillars and arches. From this upper gallery the rooms appropriated to the different members of the family were entered, while within the colonnade, opposite the entrance to the court, opened the guest room or banqueting hall, richly ceiled and wainscoted, and furnished with tables and couches.

Rhoda wore a dress of deep crimson wool, which hung in folds of classic simplicity about her fine and vigorous form, leaving bare the arms to the shoulder, and heightening their beauty and that of the firm, white throat. She sat near the fountain,

bending over an embroidery frame on which was stretched a square of fine linen. Two maid servants on the floor before her held the frame and supplied her with the gayly colored silken threads which she was busily employed in weaving into the linen. Close at hand sat the maiden, Martha, at work like her mother, while Lazarus, stretched at full length on a rug, was reading from a parchment scroll spread before him, with absorbed attention. Within the colonnade the boy Adriel, the new member of the little circle, was noisily driving his slave, who submitted willingly to reins and lash and to his position on hands and knees.

Presently the noisy play ceased, and Adriel coming forward, leaned against a pillar and looked over at the group around Rhoda. He held his whip in one hand and snapped it at arm's length. The boy had dark hair, cut close, after the Roman fashion, a fine well-set head, a dark, clear skin, and flashing eyes under the straight black brows. He wore a blue tunic, clasped on the shoulder with a jeweled ornament, and his slender limbs and feet were bare, save for his sandals. Rhoda, glancing up from her work, looked at the lithe, spirited little figure leaning against the column, the head thrown back, and smiled her bright, caressing smile.

Half reluctantly the boy's lips parted in an answering smile, disclosing white teeth and giving his

face a brilliant charm ; but the smile merged into a pout, though half-playful, and cracking his whip more vigorously than ever, he exclaimed petulantly :

“ I am tired of Seba ; he is slow and foolish. I want a real horse, Mother Rhoda, that will prance, and gallop, and give me trouble to subdue it.”

“ Nay, my Adriel,” Rhoda made laughing answer, “ hast thou not trouble enough to subdue thy own spirit ? Take thyself first in hand ; it may be the horse will come afterward.”

The boy shook his head discontentedly.

“ Why doth Lazarus lie there all the day long over that dull parchment ? It spoileth all my pleasure to see him. Come, Lazarus, wake up, thou drowsy dreamer ; come, and we will play king.”

Lazarus lifted his head, and propping it on one hand, looked over at Adriel with an expression which did not ill befit the name just bestowed upon him.

“ But thou hast been crowned so many times, Adriel, and hast roared and ruled over thy kingdom so often, that it is more tiresome than aught else I know,” he returned.

“ Well, then, thou shalt be king, and we will have a new crown. Martha, thou wilt make us a fine one out of that plate of brass ; wilt thou not ? the one that father gave me before he went away.

It shineth like gold, Lazarus, and will be right royal on thy many curls. Come!" and Adriel clapped his brown hands together imperiously.

Lazarus rose from his place with a good-tempered smile, but as he joined his foster-brother he said carelessly :

"But thou shalt be king, my Adriel. I care not for crowns ; and they suit thee exceeding well."

The boy flung back his head proudly. "And good reason why they should——" he began, then stopped himself, and throwing his arm over the shoulder of his companion, he drew him into one of the rooms beyond the colonnade.

Martha rose from her work to follow the two lads, in obedience to Adriel's request.

"Why is it, my mother," she asked, not wholly pleased with her new task, "that one can refuse Adriel nothing? He is selfish and even cruel sometimes, and yet I always feel that whatever he asks of me I must do."

Rhoda looked at her a little space, gravely musing. Then rising from her work, she passed one arm around the slender waist of the maiden, and they crossed the court together. "There is a reason for it, I think, my daughter," she made answer, "and some time thou shalt know it. But I grieve that Adriel is of so wayward a mind, and I fear greatly that he will disappoint thy father in

time to come unless he changes. Great hopes are set on him, my Martha, and yet I know not whether it may be all in vain," and a shadow of perplexity clouded Rhoda's face.

Martha's dark eyes flashed with something like impatience.

"I fear, mother, that my father flattereth Adriel overmuch, and filleth him with the thought that he is some great person. He is more indulgent and yielding with him than with his own children; but to me it seemeth he hath need of greater strictness than had my brother ever."

"Hush, Martha; it is not for thee to make thyself a judge of what thy father doeth. He hath reasons for all; thou canst believe me. We have an anxious task and a heavy laid upon us, my child, and we pray continually to be enlightened, that we may perform it in the right way."

Martha's expressive face softened.

"When cometh my father home? He hath not been in the house since yesterday at this time, I think; but he told us not that he was going away."

"He will return soon," Rhoda answered, with evident reserve. "Go now and do as the lad requested of thee," and leaving Martha at the arched entrance of an inner chamber, Rhoda returned to her embroidery frame. Her face, however, wore a look of abstraction, and she presently laid aside the

needle, and bidding a maid servant call her if her master came, she ascended the marble staircase which led from a corner of the court to the gallery above and thence to the housetop. In a darkened room, entered from the gallery, the young babe, named Mary, lay asleep, watched over by the faithful Anna. Dismissing her, Rhoda took her place by the infant's side, and pressing her forehead against the pillows of the couch, she knelt long—lost in prayerful meditation in the still secluded room.

Half an hour passed thus, when a hand was laid upon Rhoda's shoulder, and turning her head she beheld her husband, Ithamar, who had entered noiselessly, and stood looking down at her.

Rhoda sprang to her feet, startled at her husband's appearance. His hair was disarranged and great drops of sweat stood upon his forehead, while beneath his knit brows his eyes shone out with a gleam such as she had never before beheld in them. His face was haggard, and his mouth stern.

"What is it, my husband?" she exclaimed under her breath, throwing both white arms around his neck. "Art thou in danger? What has befallen thee? Hast thou been——"

"Yea, dearest one," Ithamar returned, kissing her, while a softer light for a moment rose in his eyes, "I have been even to the city of David, as I purposed."

“And what didst thou find?” whispered Rhoda eagerly, leading her husband into the remotest part of the chamber. Then in an awed tone she added the question: “Didst thou find the *child*, Ithamar?”

Her husband sadly shook his head.

“Nay, Rhoda, I found not word or trace of such a family, father or mother or child. Angels and shepherds, such as Lazarus heard of from our friend Simeon (may he rest in peace), strangers and star, all the tokens of wonder which in these last days have been reported, have vanished, if indeed they were ever seen, leaving no trace behind them,” and Ithamar threw himself wearily upon a heap of cushions, where he lay for a moment with eyes closed as if worn out.

Rhoda took her place beside him, speaking no word, although her heart beat hard with excited desire to hear further. She had not long to wait before Ithamar opened his eyes, and looking fixedly at her, said low and sternly:

“But I found traces of Herod! That he hath heard and believed these tales, as Elon hath made known to me, was manifest,” and his face grew dark with horror and indignation.

“What hath he done? Tell me, my husband,” said Rhoda gently.

“I dread to frighten sleep from thine eyelids by

telling thee what hath been shown me, and yet it must be known. But see that no one living hear it from thy lips," Ithamar added with strong emphasis.

"Thou canst trust me, my husband," said Rhoda gently. "Say on, I beg of thee."

"Thou knowest that it seemed to me prudent to make my way as quietly as might be, lest some of Herod's men should be moved to follow me and take word to the king."

Rhoda bent her head in assent.

"Accordingly it was just after the close of day when I came into the street of Bethlehem, but never, even in the dead of night, have I known such silence as I perceived through all its houses. There was not a person to be seen or heard; the lights were low and every house closed and barred."

"How strange!" murmured Rhoda.

"I came first to the inn, and there I found admission, although it was granted unwillingly it seemed to me, and to all my questions concerning the birth of a man child there some six weeks ago, I could get no answer but a stupid and stubborn denial. Seeing nothing more to gain at that time, I retired to the chamber that was shown me, off from the court, and lay down, but not to sleep. There was a strange air about the place and the people which disturbed and perplexed me. I had

a sense that something had happened of a mysterious sort which had terrified and darkened the whole town, but the host plainly would tell me nothing.

“It was about the middle watch of the night, and I was still restless and awake, when I heard a sound in the court without which aroused me to listen. The house had been closed and still for hours, and I supposed all within it to be sleeping save myself. As I listened I was aware that the sound, although not loud, was of bitter weeping, and casting my mantle around me I passed out into the court, which was dark, save for one lamp hanging near the middle.

“The sound which I believed to be of weeping, seemed to proceed from the far side of the court, and crossing its rude pavement, for it was a dismal inn, I came unheard upon the figure of a woman with her head bowed upon her knees, weeping and groaning in bitter lamentation.

“I spoke to her softly, fearing to awaken the people of the house, and believing that now at last I was near the strange mystery which I had felt since the moment I entered the town. On hearing my voice the woman broke out into yet more piteous wailing, and I heard the words :

“‘Oh, my child, my child! the son of my love, my darling, beautiful child!’

“Instantly the word of Lazarus, spoken by Simeon, of the fair and noble mother who had borne the child whom the shepherds found and worshiped doubtless in this self-same inn, or, as the boy said, in the stable near by, flashed across me, and I was stirred with the thought that this was the same young woman, and that her child was the one sought for by the three strangers.

“After many words of persuasion she lifted her head and spoke more calmly to me. When I saw her face, that it was the face of an ignorant and common servant, although so stained by tears that I could hardly discern its features in the dim light, I believed no more that in her I had found the mother of the child. None the less my heart yearned for her great sorrow, and I caused her to speak and to unfold to me how the death of her son had come to pass. He was a strong child, something under two years, and her first-born and only son. Her husband and she were both servants of the house. Her little son had never known a day of sickness or pining, and he was of a rosy and merry countenance.

“Two days before—it was in the morning—she had left him asleep in his cradle, healthy and strong, while she went about her tasks in the house. In an hour she returned to take him up and give him to eat, and she found her child dead.”

"Ithamar!" exclaimed his wife in horror.

"Yes, and at first with no trace of any cause for his death. She pulled away the little shirt and found upon his neck, Rhoda, three blue marks. He had been strangled."

Rhoda started and looked with a sudden question in her eyes into the face of Ithamar; she did not speak, but grew very white.

"I asked her who could have done such an awful deed, and she made answer that it could have been none of the household, for they all loved her child and had ever treated her with kindness, but there had been a man lingering about the place the night before, a stranger, wrapped closely in a dark mantle, and in her own mind he alone could have murdered her innocent babe.

"'But, why,' I asked her, 'should a stranger have committed so mad an act of cruelty?'" Upon this the poor, broken-hearted creature threw up her arms and said, Why? why in truth she knew not, nor why the same awful blow had befallen the other poor babes! At this I was greatly amazed, and asked her if other children in the town had died in like manner of late. She was greatly afraid, I could see; but she answered and told me that in the houses of the neighbors and townspeople, one after another within the past week, the little unweaned children had mysteriously died. No blood

was shed, she whispered, except in one case there was found a fine cut across the little throat of one boy, the dearest joy of his parents, who were the noblest family in Bethlehem. It was slight, but it was enough ; the child was dead. In all the other cases there had been those fatal marks upon the throat, or a sudden, unaccountable sickening which meant death in another way—a favorite way," added Ithamar bitterly, "in our royal house."

"Is it the work of Herod?" whispered Rhoda, with white lips, turning swiftly to the bed where her baby lay asleep, and taking her in her arms, with eyes dilating with terror.

"He hath made sure work this time," said Ithamar. "I made inquiries through all the city this morning before I returned to Jerusalem, and I found it was even as the woman had said. There is not 'a young male child left alive in the place, and yet no one can say—so craftily and so quietly has the work gone on—who hath been the instrument used in the crimes. The hand that used it is the hand of Herod, but the hand that shall avenge this awful iniquity is the hand of God!

"Never heard I such weeping ; never saw I such heartbreak and agony as I have seen among those mothers of Bethlehem this morning. My soul is weary of my life, for the sound and the sight of it will not depart from me."

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



THE REPOSE IN EGYPT.

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000



After a silence, during which Rhoda had paced the floor, holding her child tightly to her breast, Ithamar added :

“ My journey, thou seest, was fruitless. I could learn nothing of the child whom the strangers from the East came to worship. If such a child hath been born in Bethlehem it hath perished with the rest, in fulfillment of the foul purpose of the king. So one more hope is buried, my Rhoda, and the day of deliverance is not nigh.”

“ O God,” cried the mother, sinking upon her knees, “ have pity upon the sorrows of thy people ! Comfort and lift up the mothers in the city of David who are weeping for their children ; and look thou in mercy upon the mothers of Jerusalem, that our homes be not made desolate. Raise up a deliverer for us from the cruel oppression of the tyrant and set thy people free.”

But in good time, before the hand of Herod had been stretched forth against the babes of Bethlehem, the angel of the Lord had warned the Galilean in a dream, and he had taken the young child and his mother by night and had departed into Egypt. But this was hidden from the knowledge of Ithamar.

CHAPTER IX

Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them.—*Joel*.

THE weeks which followed the visit of Ithamar to Bethlehem were thick with darkness and terror in the cities of Judea. Rendered overbold by a false report of Herod's death, the famous rabbis, Judas and Matthias, led a band of their followers, among whom was Ithamar, at midday to the courts of the temple for an outbreak against the infamous oppression of the king, which should serve as a challenge alike to the power of Herod and that of Augustus. The deed was to be the tearing down of the great golden eagle, the idolatrous symbol of the Roman power, which Herod had placed above the Beautiful Gate.

Fifty men, led by Ithamar, were placed on guard at the entrances to the temple, while the fearless rabbis themselves, with forty of their younger disciples, chosen for this daring act because they had not wives and children as well as for their impetuous courage, scaled the lofty gate and, letting themselves down by ropes, proceeded

with hammers and axes to tear down the detested emblem. With a resounding clang it fell upon the pavement below amid the irrepressible cheers of the multitude, when a detachment of soldiery, overpowering the guard, closed in upon the rioters, laying under arrest the two rabbis and their immediate followers. The other conspirators were allowed to depart to their homes.

Herod, who had shortly before this betaken himself to the famous baths of Callirhoe, vainly hoping for relief from the anguish of his diseased body, now hastened to his provincial palace among the palm trees of Jericho, and sent for the rioters to be brought before him there. The forms of a nominal trial were gone through in the presence of Herod, who lay on his couch during the ceremony, his bloated body and distorted face inflamed with lust of blood and cruel triumph.

Proudly and fearlessly Judas and Matthias defied the king, and declared that what they had done was in obedience to the law. Stung by their indifference to death and their contempt of his power, Herod declared that only death by fire was a sufficient punishment for such rebels. To this the heroic men replied only that their reward would be so much the greater. •

On the following day, the twelfth of March, Judas and Matthias with their forty undaunted dis-

ciples, the flower of Jerusalem, were led out into the place of execution in the city, and there burnt alive. .

All Judea looked on in horror, and the night afterward, when an eclipse of the moon rendered the heavens dark as if by a miracle, the superstitious fear of the common people rose almost to frenzy.

Meanwhile matters concerning the succession to his throne were giving Herod ceaseless anxiety. Antipater, the heir presumptive, had become the object of his father's intense hatred from his instrumentality in the death of his half-brothers, the sons of Mariamne, for which Herod had suffered the keenest remorse. Suspecting, perhaps not without reason, some act of treachery on the part of the unscrupulous and ambitious prince, Herod had now placed him in prison and had sent to Augustus at Rome for permission to put him out of the way. But death was drawing on apace, and the old king watched the ravages of his disease and waited for the return of his messenger from Rome in hideous impatience. At length the answer came, even the one desired, and Antipater was murdered in his cell, and a new testament was drawn by Herod, declaring his son Archelaus, his successor, Herod Antipas, brother of Archelaus, tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip, tetrarch of the territory east of the sea of Tiberias.

And now the ghastly drama was nearly played out. The king, knowing his end to be near, sent out his servants and summoned to Jericho many of the noblest of Israel throughout the land. Appearing at the palace, they were conducted to the hippodrome or theatre, and there shut up, under Herod's command that immediately upon his own death they should be slain, that there might be mourning throughout the land instead of the joy which he knew full well his own death would cause.

Five days after the murder of Antipater, the form of Herod, who had been the scourge of his people, was still in death, and at last men dared to sleep, and women to cease their frightened watch over their little ones ; while the joy was rendered tumultuous by the release of the noble Jews who had been confined in the hippodrome, Salome, the sister of Herod, being too wise to allow so insane a measure to be carried out.

On the night when his father died, Archelaus, a gross and profligate prince, was holding high revel with his friends in Jerusalem. Sobered, for the time, by the announcement of his own succession to the throne, he prudently declined the title of king until it had been confirmed by Cæsar, and attempted to soothe the outraged feeling of the populace by promises of mercy and justice. The

fires of indignation, however, were burning too fiercely to be quenched by the politic utterances of a son of Herod ; the blood of the noble Judas and Matthias and their scholars, cried aloud for vengeance, and an insurrection now broke out which shook Jerusalem from citadel to outer wall.

Human life was not more sacred to the young Archelaus than it had been to his father. To stamp out a rebellion simply meant to stamp out human life to a sufficient extent, and this end was reached when, in the temple itself, three thousand of the revolutionary party had been slaughtered and the city had sunk into the exhaustion of despair for the time at least.

Archelaus, satisfied with the prompt success of his measures, now betook himself to Rome to appear before Cæsar and press for the confirmation of his title to the throne of his father against all rival claimants. His departure was the signal for a fierce insurrection in Galilee by the Zealots, the old revolutionary party of the north, under Judas, a stern fanatic and popular hero, whose war-cry was :

“No Lord but Jehovah ; no tax but to the temple ; no friend but a Zealot.”

But the Roman armies marched through the smiling fields of Galilee, burning the villages and crucifying the rebels by the thousand, and once

more the struggling nation yielded to the iron hand which held it fast. In Jerusalem, however, hope and purpose stirred again when it was known that Archelaus had departed, and strong men shook off the paralysis of despair which lay upon them, to strike one final, determined blow for freedom and for life.

CHAPTER X

Out of Egypt did I call my son.—*St. Matthew.*

“WE appeal unto Cæsar!” It was Ithamar who spoke.

“Unto Cæsar!” echoed Rhoda, his wife, with white lips as the fateful possibilities involved in a measure so bold and so unprecedented rose before her.

It was far into the night, a night in which a prolonged and secret council had been held in the banqueting hall of the house of Ithamar. The men present, men of influence in the city, rulers and Pharisees, had left the house but now with resolute faces, and knowing her husband was alone at length, Rhoda, who had passed the long hours of the night in restless anxiety, had hastened to the room below and now stood before Ithamar, waiting for what he would make known to her of the consultation.

For a moment they faced each other in silence. Both faces, a year ago so brave and bright, were pale and tense with feeling, and deeply marked by the troubles and sorrows through which they had passed.

"We appeal unto Cæsar?" Rhoda broke the silence, again repeating the exclamation.

"Against the house of Herod," said Ithamar with stern emphasis.

"By letter?" questioned Rhoda.

Her husband shook his head, and she was quick to note a shade of sadness which softened the unyielding determination of his expression.

"You do not purpose to send men of our people to Rome?" she exclaimed in quick alarm; "Ithamar, thou wilt not thyself go to Rome?" and the beautiful eyes brimmed over with painful tears.

Ithamar drew her to him and pressed her head against his shoulder with a strong, protecting caress, but he did not speak at once; perhaps he could not. When at length he spoke it was with a voice which trembled in spite of all his habitual self-command.

"My beautiful one, my dearest," he said tenderly, "thou wert ever as true to thy country and thy nation as the high-hearted women of old; let not thy courage fail thee now. It is to Rhoda, the wife of Ithamar, that lesser and weaker souls will look in this hour. If she falters, they will falter; if she fails, they will fail."

"Nay, tell me all," she said faintly, in a voice from which all the tone had fled.

“Fifty of our best and wisest men have been chosen to follow Archelaus and to demand a hearing before Augustus. When we appear we shall accuse the house of Herod freely and fearlessly, holding back nothing, and we shall petition the emperor humbly and as men do for life itself, to rid us of the awful tyranny of that family, and yet further, Rhoda, to permit us to be governed by our own laws and by men of our own faith and nation. What thinkest thou?”

“I think that I see the hand of my husband in the enterprise from beginning to end,” replied Rhoda with proud sadness, “for who but he, now, in Jerusalem, hath the mind or the courage for so daring and so brave an attempt?”

There was no reply.

“Are the men all from Jerusalem?” Rhoda asked.

“Nay; Joseph goes from Arimathea, and several others from Judea; from Galilee also we have chosen a number, none of whom thou knowest, I think, save Enoch, of Bethsaida.”

“Yes, I saw him with his wife and Philip, their son, at the Passover last month. But, Ithamar, thou sayest ‘we’; it is true then that thou wilt leave us, that thou art to go on that endless journey? Oh, how can it be?”

“It is harder for me, perchance, my Rhoda,

even than for thee," whispered her husband, and for a moment they were silenced by their strong anguish.

At last Rhoda asked, growing calm as she grew hopeless: "Must it be soon?"

"We shall embark from Cæsarea in different ships and at different times, in order not to arouse the notice of the people. Archelaus sailed a month ago, and it is needful that we follow him as soon as may be, lest he be confirmed by the emperor before our embassy arrives. Also we wish to stir up the Jews resident in Rome that we may take with us a large following of them to strengthen our appeal; hence, we must act at once. Seest thou, my best beloved?"

"When wilt thou leave me?" she asked.

"It must be even to-morrow at nightfall." The words seemed wrung from Ithamar's lips.

"And thou wilt be away—how long?" she asked again, in the same dulled, unnatural voice.

"I fear that it may be not less than two years."

"Yes, I thought it," she murmured. "Two years. That is forever. Yes, it is forever; there are days and weeks and months, and there are seasons and years—and yet I would not bid thee stay. But if your purpose cometh to naught—and I fear me greatly that it must—the anger of the emperor and the hatred of the house of Herod

will both be arrayed against you, and most especially against thee, for thy leadership will be known—it cannot be hid.”

Ithamar could find no words with which to remove a fear which he knew to be well founded.

“Ithamar,” Rhoda spoke again after a little pause, “what man of the company will be chosen, thinkest thou, to plead our cause before Cæsar?”

“I have been chosen, my wife,” was the low answer.

Rhoda drew herself from his embrace and stood before him with wild eyes, like those of some hunted creature, her face and form rigid as if turned to stone.

“Then let us live our last day together,” she breathed rather than spoke, “for I shall never see thy face again under that sun,” and she pointed to the door through which the first rays of daylight were stealing.

Long and solemnly they communed together and as the house became astir in the advancing day and they could no longer hope to be left alone, Ithamar said :

“And whatever be the issue of this journey, my Rhoda, remember that I give into thy peculiar care young Adriel. Let him be to thee thy king and thy son, and train him to all courage and patriotism and virtue.”

Rhoda sighed heavily.

"I know that herein is no easy task," pursued her husband; "for his is a fiery and an untamed spirit, but withal of royal nobleness and generosity. At least we know him to be of the Maccabean blood, and I hope to see in him a lion-hearted prince, true successor to 'the Hammer of God.'"

"May Jehovah grant it," said Rhoda; "but I had hoped more for good to come from Bethlehem, from the child of whom Simeon told."

"Yes, I too hoped that; but thou knowest how the foul cruelty of Herod stamped out that hope. Naught is left us, Rhoda, but to train the young Maccabean, and to trust that in him our nation shall some day know its royal deliverer."

Even in that very hour a Galilean, a man with patient eyes, leading an ass on which sat a woman holding a young child, was toiling along the dusty highways of Judea, coming up thither from Egypt, where they had found a safe refuge from the cruelty of the king. Weary and travel-worn they sought rest and a home in the city of David; but hearing that Archelaus had succeeded to the throne of his father, Herod, they hastened northward. Turning aside into Galilee, they came and dwelt in the city of Nazareth, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

CHAPTER XI

O Lord God of hosts,
How long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people ?
Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears,
And given them tears to drink in large measure.
Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours :
And our enemies laugh among themselves.— *The Psalms.*

EIGHT years had passed since the departure of Ithamar and his fellow patriots for Rome when, on an autumn morning in Jerusalem, three young men might have been seen passing down the street of the upper city leading to the royal bridge.

The eldest of the three was of sturdy figure, with strong features and frank, clear eyes. There was a certain simplicity in his costume and bearing and even in the expression of his face, in spite of its marked intelligence, which betokened the provincial. Beside him walked a slender youth with the refined and thoughtful face of the scholar. His eyes had a peculiar dreamy introspection in their look under the high, white forehead, and his features indicated fine perception and sensibility while they were not lacking in manly strength. The long and ample garments of these two friends were alike conformed to the prevailing costume of

the Jews, but the young man who walked by their side wore a short white tunic, after the manner of young Greeks of the period, over which, fastened upon the right shoulder, was a white mantle, also short, and richly embroidered with gold and jewels. The form of this youth was remarkable both for delicacy and athletic grace, and his bearing was singularly proud. He had a fine head and a dark, handsome face, attractive in spite of a somewhat imperious and impatient expression.

As the three friends neared the magnificent building of the hippodrome, gorgeous with its ornaments of gold and silver and rich sculpture, the student, in whom we recognize the son of Ithamar, now grown to manhood, laid his hand on the shoulder of the last-named youth, saying :

“Surely, Adriel, thou wilt come to-day with Philip and me to the academy, wilt thou not ?” He smiled as he spoke, but there was an undertone of anxiety in his voice.

“Nay, Lazarus,” the other made answer carelessly, “what care I for the academy and the endless poring over those dull books ? Half that the rabbis teach us is musty rubbish, and the other half I know already. This is the academy that best befits a young man who wants to know himself and the power of life and joy !” and with sparkling eyes he glanced toward the great theatre.

936616A

The young man who had been called Philip looked on with unconcealed displeasure.

"A strange place, it would seem, for a Jew," he exclaimed, "in the halls of the heathen! If thou hast no religion, Adriel, to restrain thee, thou mightest at least have patriotism sufficient not to bow thus to insults put upon thy nation," and his glance at the temple confronting the theatre across the chasm of the Tyropæon told his thought.

"Ah, you take life too seriously, my good fellows," said Adriel, with half-unconscious insolence. "What is gained by wearing sullen faces and forever dashing your poor, devoted heads against the marble walls of the Roman power? The walls are nothing weakened, look you, and you have broken heads, and it may be broken hearts as well, for your pains."

At the last words Lazarus looked with wondering reproach into the face of Adriel, who met the look with a gentler word in his foster-brother's ear, which however, did but deepen the sadness of the young scholar's face.

"Then it is farewell, Adriel, is it?" he asked gravely.

"I believe it must be, my brother," was Adriel's answer, given in a half-apologetic tone; "I promised Sebastien to run a race with him in the gymnasium at this hour."

With this the friends parted, Philip and Lazarus pursuing their way to the academy, which Philip, who had come from Galilee, was sojourning in Jerusalem in order to attend, while Adriel entered the splendid hall of the hippodrome, where he was met and welcomed by a number of young men of the court as a familiar companion.

On his return home that evening Lazarus found his mother, Rhoda, waiting anxiously for him. With her was Elon, the old friend of Ithamar, grown older, but with the same sagacious face and courtly manner as before. He now occupied the position of chamberlain in the court of Archelaus as he had formerly in that of Herod. A patriot and loyal to the heart, this man had found that he could best serve the interests of his people by retaining a position close to the ruling power, and this he had done through all the tumultuous times which followed the death of Herod, when all Palestine was in arms and revolution followed revolution.

Rhoda, in whose sad and careworn face it would be hard to recognize the proud and joyous young mother of the earlier day, was profoundly agitated, as her son perceived, and he threw an arm around her and bent to kiss her forehead with reverent and affectionate solicitude.

“My son,” said Rhoda, trembling with excite-

ment, "Elon, thy father's friend, hath come to tell me that he hath knowledge of thy father!"

At this announcement the young man grew white to the lips and gazed in speechless amazement at the chamberlain.

It is necessary to go back for a little and rehearse what befell the embassy led by Ithamar, which went to Rome upon the accession of Archelaus to appeal to Cæsar against the house of Herod. Arrived in the imperial city, they found a strong following among the Roman Jews, and on the day appointed they were permitted to come before the Emperor Augustus, at which time they were confronted by Archelaus himself and many others of his family. With equal courage and power Ithamar pleaded the cause of his people, disclosing the cruel treacheries and bloody outrages of Herod and of Archelaus, and begging in proud humility that the all-powerful emperor would give the Jewish people the right under himself to govern themselves by their own laws.

The claims of Archelaus had already been eloquently set forth by the orator Nikolaus, and strengthened by every possible craft and wile in the power of the son of Herod, who had even thrown himself at the emperor's feet; but the impressive personality of Ithamar, the spectacle of fifty men of noble presence and bearing, who had taken their

lives in their hands and made the long and perilous journey from the remote province to appeal to him in person, and whose plea was reinforced by the presence of thousands of his own citizens, made a strong impression upon the mind of Augustus. For a time he wavered in his purpose of confirming Archelaus, according to the testament of Herod, as his successor; but he finally compromised, declaring the aspiring prince *ethnarch*, not king, and promising the Jews that he should be deposed unless he proved worthy of his office.

It now remained for Ithamar and his companions to return across the wide and perilous waters of the Mediterranean, bearing some results at least of their enterprise, if not all that they had hoped. The long voyage was safely accomplished, and a little band consisting of Joseph of Arimathea, Enoch of Bethsaida, and Ithamar of Jerusalem, landed at nightfall on the quay at Cæsarea, nearly two years from the time when they embarked. With hearts beating high with joy and expectation, they turned their faces toward home, thinking of wives and children waiting for them there. Then Joseph and Enoch, at first to their annoyance, and later to their alarm and terror, found that they had in some way, in the dark streets of Cæsarea, become separated from Ithamar. Of their perplexity and dismay it is needless to

write. They sought for him day and night, week after week ; but they sought in vain, and to Joseph was given the sorrowful duty of entering the home in Jerusalem and making known to Rhoda the mysterious disappearance of her husband.

In the months and years which followed, no clue was ever found by which they could trace his fate. Whether basely murdered on that night or reserved for a slow and torturing death, or whether through all these years he was languishing in prison, could be matter for conjecture only. This much only was certain, that Ithamar had fallen a prompt and easy prey to the vindictive malice of Archelaus, who attributed to him the fact that he had returned to Judea shorn of his hereditary title of king, and hedged about by the irritating warnings of the now enlightened Cæsar.

Six years had passed since the night when Ithamar landed at Cæsarea, and the agitation of Rhoda and Lazarus was great when Elon declared to them that at last he had discovered a clue to the fate of him who was to them, living or dead, the supreme human object of affection.

“It hath come to my ear, from a source which I cannot choose but trust,” declared the chamberlain, “that our noble and beloved friend is still alive, and is imprisoned at Cæsarea ; that he was attacked and rendered insensible soon after landing

that night, when at a little distance from his companions, under cover of the darkness, and carried away to the innermost recesses of the prison where he hath remained ever since."

"And thou art sure that he is still alive?" murmured Rhoda.

"I am certain that he was alive a week ago," Elon made answer, "although broken, as needs must be, from the long confinement."

"Oh, my husband!" exclaimed Rhoda in an ecstasy of emotion. Lazarus had need of all his strength to master his agitation, but with the softer feeling of joy a fierce anger blazed within him and aroused his energy and his desire for action.

Casting aside his habitual reserve, the young man broke forth with an eager and vehement declaration of his purpose to free his father and to have vengeance upon the cowardly and cruel tyrant. To all that he said Elon listened silently, and when Lazarus paused with clenched hands and flashing eyes, looking for confirmation to the others, the older man said half sadly :

"Nay, my son, all that were useless. There would be but another life thrown away, and thy mother would be left doubly desolate."

"Oh, Elon," said Rhoda, weeping bitterly, "what can we do? Will not God have pity upon us in our helplessness and sorrow?"

Elon looked upon her with deep compassion, as he answered :

“ One only thing which I can see, is to be done, and from that I have but a faint hope, I grieve to say. It is that thou, noble lady, shalt thyself find access to Archelaus, which I can presently gain for thee, and thyself shalt plead for thy husband’s life and deliverance from his bonds.”

“ Oh, my friend,” exclaimed Rhoda, suddenly springing to her feet, while her form seemed to thrill with its old power, and her face grew bright with the light of happier days, “ can it be even so, that to me it may be granted to bring life and freedom to my dearest lord? Most gladly would I die for him! Let me hasten, I beg of thee, to the palace, and our God will give me words when I come before the king, even as he did unto Esther of old.”

While they planned together the most favorable measures of which they might avail themselves in so great a crisis, in the street without young Adriel stood in the starlight, returning from his day’s pleasure in the theatre. With him was the young nobleman, Sebastien, a hanger-on of the court of Archelaus, who had attached himself of late with ardent enthusiasm to Adriel, and had become, to the great uneasiness of Rhoda and Lazarus, his closest friend. Both were flushed with wine and

with the excitement of the gay scenes of contest amid which the day had been passed, Adriel being unwontedly boisterous in his manner.

“Tell me now, Adriel,” said his friend, sinking his voice to a confidential whisper, “what in truth art thou to those worthy and pious folk?” and he indicated the house of Ithamar, before which they stood. “It is a puzzle to me continually how so princely a fellow as thou couldst have sprung from the same stock as these good Pharisees,” and Sebastien infused a world of contemptuous patronage into the last words.

“Not a drop of their blood runs in my veins!” exclaimed Adriel proudly.

“Nay, speak lower, my Adriel,” whispered Sebastien, “and tell me all. Thou knowest that thou canst trust me with the deepest secrets of thy heart. Have I not proved to thee that there is no man living whom I hold thy peer in the court of Cæsar even, much less here?”

Adriel flushed deeper with the flattery of his friend as he replied :

“I do trust thee, Sebastien, and I will tell thee what no other man could win from my lips, but it must be on thy faith and fealty as an honorable man.”

“I swear,” returned Sebastien, with an impartial oath which included the God of the Hebrews as

well as a number of the gods of Greece. Satisfied with this assurance, Adriel bent and whispered a few words in his ear. The effect upon Sebastien was singular. His color changed from red to white and back again, while amazement and a certain crafty satisfaction played together over his face. He made a motion as if he would drop on his knee, but Adriel restrained him with a slightly grandiose gesture.

“It is enough,” he said with drunken dignity; “the secret lies between us, my Sebastien. Outwardly let all be as before.”

With this they parted for the night. When Adriel presented himself within the house, Lazarus seeing, as he had often seen of late, his dissipated face and reckless bearing, said to himself bitterly: “And is this the hope of Israel?”

CHAPTER XII

Thy fierce wrath is gone over me ;
Thy terrors have cut me off.
They came round about me like water all the day long ;
They compassed me about together,
Lover and friend hast thou put far from me,
And mine acquaintance into darkness.

—*The Psalms.*

“ I THAMAR is released ! ”

The announcement was made with a flourish of trumpets by a royal herald standing in the court of the house of Ithamar, while Rhoda, her son, and two fair young daughters stood to receive him, transfixed with joy. Close at hand was Adriel, sharing but languidly in the deep emotion of the moment, while behind him, among the servants of the house, the dark, impassive face of his servant, Seba, might be noticed.

“ He will follow me soon,” the herald made declaration a second time, and turned to the door of entrance to the house through which a company of armed men now followed him. They wore the helmet and coat of mail of Roman soldiers, but their short swords were thrust into their belts that their hands might be left free for a burden

they were carrying, the sight of which struck a chill of cold dismay to the waiting wife of Ithamar.

It was a bier.

Advancing, the soldiers laid it with the form upon it covered by a silken pall, on the mosaic pavement at the feet of Rhoda, who looked at them with imploring wonder in her dilated eyes, and with white, speechless lips.

“What meaneth this?”

It was Lazarus who spoke in a loud, stern voice, his whole frame thrilling with a nameless fear.

In silence, with downcast eyes, the armed men pointed to the bier; they did not go away and they did not speak.

Approaching it, Lazarus stooped and lifted the pall. The body thus revealed was that of a shrunken and wasted man, prematurely old. The head was covered with thick, snow-white hair; the countenance was noble and majestic even in death.

“It is Ithamar! It is my husband!”

With this cry of woe unutterable, Rhoda fell upon the pavement, embracing the motionless form, returned to her thus by the malignant cruelty of Archelaus. This cruelty was the more deadly that, in the interview which he had a few days before granted Rhoda, he had conveyed to her a vague hope that her prayer for the life and liberation of her husband might be granted.

"Thus befits it," cried the herald, now again advancing, "that those who plot against the royal house should perish! We are here to lay against this household the crime of harboring a claimant to the throne, a base-born pretender, who boasts himself to have in his veins the blood of the Asmonæan princes. Soldiers, you will lay him under arrest." At this point the soldiers advanced to Adriel, who had turned deadly pale at the word "pretender," and placing manacles on his hands they drew him within a circle which they formed.

But not in silence or with the endurance of noble manhood did Adriel suffer this action. With wild looks he cast about him for help and interference, and seeing that all was in vain, he cried :

"That hound of a Sebastien hath betrayed me! This is his work! If ever I meet him again he shall feel what revenge can do!" and he ground his teeth in impotent fury.

Seeing that Adriel was safely in the hands of the soldiers, the herald concluded his announcement with the following words, turning where Lazarus stood, supporting the broken form of his mother between her weeping daughters :

"Forasmuch as Rhoda, the wife of Ithamar, hath consented together with him and hath harbored and nourished this pretended prince, she is declared by the most worthy Archelaus to be ban-

ished from the city of Jerusalem from this day and hour, and her house and all therein to be made the possession of the State."

.

A red sun was sinking in a brassy sky and the hot breath of the simoon was blowing over the fainting land, when four figures in coarse black garments, with ashes on their heads, might have been seen wandering along the highway passing by the foot of Mount Olivet to Jericho.

Behind them at a distance walked a woman servant bearing water in a skin and a portion of food. Her face was stained with tears and worn by care. It was Anna, the faithful nurse in the house of Ithamar, following her mistress and the children she had loved and tended into banishment.

The maiden Martha, and Mary, who was still a child, walked in advance, clasping each the other's hand, while Lazarus supported the feeble steps of Rhoda. The young man's face was white and drawn with bitter grief and indignation, but that of Rhoda was strangely calm.

"To have suffered this for *him*," he murmured fiercely under his breath; "ungrateful and unworthy! It is the shame of it that stings me most!"

"Say not so, my Lazarus," Rhoda's voice was

weak and faint, but very gentle; "he was our only hope, and thy father clung to him and believed that it might be he who should deliver Israel. Though he proved unworthy, yet it was a righteous hope. Let us feel that we suffer for our people rather than for him."

"Thou art right as ever, dearest mother," Lazarus made tender answer; "forgive me that I think of aught save thy grievous sorrow."

She only smiled for answer, while a few tears fell from her weary eyes.

"It is almost over now," she said after a little while; "it will not be long, my son, that I shall suffer or sorrow. Our Lord God will be merciful to me and give me rest. I do not even mourn now; the end is too near."

"Oh, my mother, say not so," exclaimed the young man with sharp anguish. "Thou art dearer than aught else on earth to us and we cannot let thee go."

Darkness had fallen now, and the hot wind was stilled. A young moon was in the sky.

"See, mother," said the maidens, "yonder lights are in Bethany. Canst thou walk thither, or do thy limbs fail thee even now?"

"Nay, my sweet daughters," Rhoda answered, "my God is my strength, and I trust him to lead me even unto a quiet haven."

“But wilt thou not rest awhile?” they asked her.

“Not yet,” she said, “not yet, but very soon.”

The moon had set behind the shoulder of Olivet when the sad little company entered the silent street of Bethany. A place of refuge was prepared for them in the house of a friend, and here the mother, Rhoda, laid her weary limbs down to rest, the same patient smile upon her face.

When they came to her in the morning the smile of eternal peace was there, for the pure spirit had fled to the bosom of its God.

“Of whom the world was not worthy,” they murmured through thick-falling tears.

INTERLUDE

**Behold my servant whom I have chosen :
My beloved in whom my soul is well pleased.**

—*Isaiah.*

How is it that ye sought me?—*Luke.*

IT was the joyous springtime of the year A. D. 9, and the paschal week was drawing to a close. The high holy days being past, many of the pilgrims from the country around had left the city, but even now it was full of life and stir in unwonted degree, and the temple courts were still thronged from sunrise to sunset with worshipers.

The afternoon was nearly over, and breezes wafted up from the Kedron Valley, blew through the colonnades of the temple with refreshing coolness. A young rabbi, who paced alone the many-colored mosaic of the porch adjacent to the court of the Gentiles, deep in thought, lifted his head and seemed aroused to a consciousness of himself and his surroundings by the breath of the wind. His face was striking in its refined beauty, but was shadowed by profound sadness, approaching, in the expression of the mouth, even to bitterness.

Out upon the terrace, beyond the colonnade where he walked, a little group of members of the Sanhedrin, learned in the law, were expounding its teachings to a circle of men and youths who listened to them with reverent attention.

The young rabbi leaned against a pillar and looked upon the scene. One man in the group of teachers he watched closely, while the cloud upon his brow deepened and the bitterness of his expression grew more marked. This was a man in the prime of life, of conspicuous person and bearing, stately, self-conscious, authoritative. His features were finely formed, but there was a singular craftiness in the eyes and a sardonic sneer upon the mouth. This was no other than the Sadducee, Annas, newly appointed high priest, the highest ecclesiastic in the land. Beside him was the august and venerable figure of the aged Hillel, the most honored of all rabbis in Jerusalem, surrounded by other learned doctors, among them, silent for the most part, Nicodemus, who had been the friend of Ithamar.

The young rabbi noted the distinguished teachers, but listened indifferently to their trite comments on the well-worn themes under discussion, until his interest was suddenly quickened by a question asked in a sweet, clear voice by some one in the little audience, with marked humility, but a question so thoughtful and going so far below the surface over which the smooth commonplaces of the doctors were playing, that it challenged the attention of all. The listener moved forward to one of the outer columns to see the

speaker, when to his amazement, he perceived that it was a lad, a boy of perhaps twelve years. As he looked, the wonder of the young rabbi deepened, for he recognized at once a spirit high and pure as of one upon whom the grace of God rested in full measure. There was nothing of precocious or self-conscious wisdom about this boy; he looked up into the faces of the teachers with innocent reverence, while absorbed earnestness shone out of the great, spiritual eyes under the pure brow. It was just a natural boy face, full of sweetness and health, but the young rabbi was vividly impressed by the strength, courage, and manliness which it betokened, as well as by its spiritual illumination.

Annas, the high priest, attracted by the child, bent his keen gaze upon him and himself directed a somewhat puzzling question to him, waiting with his ironic smile to see how the boy would struggle for an answer. But straight and true as an arrow to its mark the answer came, with the profound wisdom of simple truth, and the lad's face was as calm and clear of confusion as before.

The interest of all was now aroused, and the boy became the chief object of attention to the audience as well as to the learned men, although himself plainly unconscious of the fact. The young rabbi, from his post apart, watched him with intense interest until his notice was drawn to a

woman who had entered the circle with timid steps and with the appearance of deep anxiety. She had been followed by an elderly man who stood waiting, ill at ease, on the outer limit of the company. He wore the dress of a Galilean.

With hurried steps the woman approached the boy and embraced him with a tenderness and a joy which she could not restrain.

"Surely," thought the young rabbi, "somewhere, at some time, I have seen that woman before. She hath a grace of loveliness about her which, once seen, a man could not forget. But when could it have been, and where?"

It could be seen that the mother was so filled with joy in finding her son that she was unaware of the looks of the company, which were fixed upon her, as she exclaimed :

"Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee, behold these three days, sorrowing."

There was a solemn light as of a newly awakened soul in the eyes of the lad as he lifted them to his mother's face.

"How is it," he asked gently, "that ye sought me? Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business?"

Even as he spoke he turned and followed his mother with quiet submission, and they, rejoining

the man who had stood waiting, walked quickly away and were lost to sight.

But the young rabbi, returning to his solitary walk, mused long, being astonished at the understanding and the answers of the lad, and even more deeply moved by the purity and peace which invested him.

"The secret of the Lord is with the lad," he said to himself, his own heart crying out in its yearning for the peace of God.

The company on the terrace had broken up now. Nicodemus, passing between the sculptured pillars, chanced to meet the young rabbi.

"Ah, my Lazarus," he exclaimed, "thou shouldst have been with us yonder! A marvelous boy was there, one filled with wisdom, and strong in spirit."

"Yes, I saw him," replied the young teacher, "and surely the grace of God was upon him."

An hour later Lazarus crossed the brook Kedron, and went out from the city on his solitary walk to his home in Bethany. The bitter sadness of his face had given way to a look of tender musing, for he was thinking upon the wonderful boy, and faint echoes of some forgotten scene in his own happy childhood vibrated in his consciousness, but would not declare themselves distinctly to his memory.

That night he dreamed of being in the temple, while beside him stood the aged friend of his boyhood, the holy Simeon. Together they were looking upon the face of an infant, and behold, the eyes of the babe were the eyes of the boy whom he had seen that day among the teachers of the law.

BOOK II

THE BROTHER OF MEN

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for ; my flesh that I
seek

In the godhead ! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
A face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like to me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever ; a Hand like this
hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee ! see the Christ
stand !

—*Browning.*

CHAPTER I

Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples : but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.—*Isaiah.*

THE mild and beneficent sway of Augustus had closed, and for more than a decade the throne of the Cæsars had been occupied by the haughty and despotic Tiberius. Under his influence the lust of pomp and pride had reached its climax ; it could go no farther. Throughout the Roman Empire extravagance was boundless ; indulgence, however base, unbridled ; religion was debauchery ; disgust and weariness universal.

“What torments us,” said Seneca, *“is not the tempest, but the nausea.”*

Humanity, left to itself, sickened of itself. It sighed for some power outside itself to energize and purify. And in the darkness there dawned the light of a vague hope, for everywhere men longed for purity and peace, and a mysterious expectation stirred their hearts.

“Give me new consolations,” wrote Pliny, *“great and strong, of which I have never heard or read.”*

This was the universal human cry. In Palestine, so long the battlefield of the great powers, the military system of Rome, the culture and luxury of Greece, and the proud exclusiveness of the Jews, flourished together. Judea had become merely a Roman province, governed directly by a Roman deputy resident in Cæsarea, known as a procurator; for the excesses of Archelaus, who had been banished by the emperor, A. D. 9, to Gaul, and the restlessness of the people, especially the citizens of Jerusalem, had convinced Augustus that even the semi-independence allowed under the rule of Herod the Great was unwise. Two of the sons of Herod, Herod Antipas and Philip, still held sway over their hereditary domains of Galilee and Ituræa; Antipas inherited the vices of his father without his ability, while Philip was the best of the sons of Herod, ruling his people wisely and well.

The Roman procurators or governors of Judea were chosen from the ranks of knights, which at this time had sunk very low. They were men of inferior character, hard-headed, selfish politicians, who sought the utmost personal advantage to be gained in their brief period of power; for Coponius, the first to hold this office upon the banishment of Archelaus, had been followed already by three others. The enormities of the House of

Herod had become indeed a thing of the past, but in the selfish policy of heathen hirelings, the long-suffering people found that they had gained little. The high-priesthood, degraded to a mere political appointment, had been continued all these years in the family of Annas, the crafty and scheming Sadducee. His son-in-law, Caiaphas, at this time held the high office, but Annas was well known to be the still dominant power.

It was the year A. D. 26, and a time of crisis in Judea, for Valerius Gratus, for eleven years the Roman governor, had been recalled by Tiberius, and a new deputy, named Pontius Pilate, had been sent out to govern the province in his room. Would the people fare better or worse at his hands? men were asking everywhere; worse, they thought, could scarcely be, and as for better—hope was giving place in these last days to sullen endurance, which might yet flash into fiery resistance if strained too hard.

So in gay, half-heathen Cæsarea, where the great temple of Cæsar looked out over the restless blue of the Mediterranean, banners waved from the imperial palace, the air was alive with martial music, and the Roman cohorts from the fortress marched with thundering tread along the marble quays to welcome the coming of Cæsar's representative, while in Jerusalem men waited silently.

It was a dark-browed man who landed from the Roman galley that day, a man with a heavy jaw and restless eyes set deep and near together. With him came a gentle lady, Procula, his wife, and a goodly retinue of servants; the lady smiled in answer to the welcoming throngs, but the new governor passed on in cold indifference between the ranks of armed men.

The dwellers in Jerusalem had not long to wait. Full soon the new governor showed them what they might expect from him.

Since the destruction of the Roman eagle above the Beautiful Gate of the temple by the two rabbis, no man—king or governor—had tested the temper of the people by bringing into the holy city any effigy of god or emperor, or any insignia of power in the likeness of a living thing. Even the money coined in Judea by the Romans was without the image of the emperor, out of regard to the scruples of the people, although the denaria or Roman pennies bearing the head of Tiberius were in circulation. The nation, so severely punished for its persistent sin of idolatry through all its early history, had brought back from the Babylonian captivity a loathing of every suggestion of that sin whence had come all its woe, and a spirit of scrupulous obedience to the command: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,

or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath."

Respecting this feeling, the governors had hitherto caused the military standards, each bearing a bust of the emperor and a Roman eagle, to be left in Cæsarea by the regiments holding the garrison of Antonia, the citadel of Jerusalem, which was built on Mount Moriah, close beside the temple, albeit named by Herod for the pagan, Mark Antony. With the advent of Pilate the usual changes in the command were made, and new regiments were ordered to Jerusalem. Their march was so timed that the city was entered by night. When the morning dawned, the people awoke to find the Roman eagles flashing on the standards of the soldiers throughout the city, and planted on the fortress Antonia, even on Mount Moriah itself, in the close neighborhood of the temple.

The indignation of the people knew no bounds. The spirit of the martyred rabbis sprang to sudden life. Pilate had given them his measure. They knew now with what manner of man they had to do, insolent, overbearing, unscrupulous; then he too should learn with what elements he had to deal. Crowds poured down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, where they surrounded the palace and demanded from the governor the removal of the standards from the holy city. Pilate received their

petitions with haughty contempt, little dreaming of the tenacity of their purpose or of the courage that was in these despised provincials. For five days and nights they ceased not to press their demands, until, at last, in scornful disgust at their persistence, Pilate summoned them to a final audience. He had concealed large numbers of his soldiers around the open square where he received the Jews, and when he found they would not withdraw their request, a signal was given and the soldiers with naked swords surrounded the petitioners, threatening them with instant death.

To the amazement of the governor, who looked for speedy surrender, the men laid bare their breasts and, kneeling, bade the soldiers strike, for they would cheerfully suffer death rather than permit the desecration of their city and temple. Pilate, amazed, found himself driven into a corner. Well he knew that a bloody massacre would be an ominous beginning to his rule, and one which would bring him into disfavor with Tiberius, the thing most dreaded by the petty deputies of Rome. Pride and fear struggled together for a little while as he faced the people and measured his power with theirs. In bitter and angry humiliation, however, he perceived that his only course was to yield, and the petitioners departed victorious to witness the removal of the eagles from their city.

Thus, at the outset of his rule over Judea, the people tried their strength with that of Pilate and found that they had means by which they could force him to do their will. But shame and hatred rankled long in the heart of the governor, and again and again he used his power to its utmost limit of cruelty and violence. Like all cruel men, he was cowardly ; like most obstinate men, he was irresolute ; like selfish men ever, his higher nature was held in chains by his lower ambitions.

Such were the powers and passions at work when, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod Antipas being tetrach of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa, Annas and Caiaphas being high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness, and he came into all the country about Jordan preaching the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

CHAPTER II

In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light : they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.—*Isaiah*.

GALILEE! a land smiling, fruitful, and sunny, full of cornfields, olive groves, and vineyards, gay with flowers, rich with fruits, a goodly land and a pleasant. The mountains of Judea were barren and rugged, but the hills of Galilee were green and sloped softly to the fair, fertile valleys ; the air of the highlands was free and glorious, and the hardy peasants were brave and true, the strength of the hills in their hearts.

Happy villages were scattered thickly through all the land ; simple communities, where the strife of Sadducee and Pharisee and the intrigues of court and council were alike unknown ; where men dwelt in peace and homely comfort with their neighbors, working with their hands among the fig trees, the olives, and the vines, instead of with their heads among nice distinctions and subtle sophistries of the schools.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

A

L



CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN.



And here, set deep below the Mediterranean level among encircling hills was a lake, surpassing in its beauty, edged with a beach of shining whiteness, its banks dotted richly with pleasant homes and marble palaces. The eastern shore was comparatively wild and desert, but on the luxuriant plain of Gennesareth of the western side, clustered many villages, Magdala, Bethsaida, Capernaum, their miniature harbors full of fishing fleets, while above them on the shore, sunburned fishermen mended their nets and made ready for their day's work. For it was morning. The air was of exquisite softness, but a fresh breeze came through the deep ravines of the eastern shore and dimpled the lake into living beauty, as the small crystal waves broke upon the beach, where pale pink oleanders almost dipped their blossoms into the crests of snowy foam. White sails darted swiftly to and fro, as one boat after another was launched, and pleasure craft, bright with colored awnings and pennants, put out from the marble quays of the city of Tiberias.

The Herods had ever been magnificent builders, and Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, had rivaled the beauties of Cæsarea in his capital city, rising in glittering splendor among its stately palm trees on the western shore of the lake, south of Magdala. Despite its outward loveliness the

new and royal city was not a favorite dwelling-place with the Jews, for it had been built upon a foundation of death and defilement; below its streets lay the graves of an ancient burial place. The palace or Golden House of the king—a title commonly conferred upon the tetrarch, now in the twenty-second year of his reign—was built upon an eminence above the city, with the usual lavish display of the Herods. Below it, on the public street, stood a spacious and comfortable house, the home of Chuza, a steward of Herod, and his wife, Joanna.

In an inner chamber of this dwelling, opening upon the pleasant court, a sick man was lying, a paralytic. Although wasted and powerless now, his form must once have been graceful and of fine proportions. The pallid face bore deep lines, but they were not the lines of age; the lips, once beautiful, had now a piteous tremor of weakness; and the dark, sunken eyes seemed the only living thing about the man. They roved around the room incessantly, and in the depth of them lurked a sadness as of despair.

A lady of noble aspect, clad in rich and beautiful garments, entered the room and crossing to the couch of the sick man, gave him the morning greeting in a firm, cheerful voice. She was a strong and stately dame, full of energy and active

power, and her presence made the helplessness of the sufferer more striking than before.

"I must leave thee to-day for a brief season," she said, bending and taking one white, wasted hand in her firm clasp.

The sufferer only looked at her with startled, half-reproachful eyes.

"It will not be for long," she continued, as one who soothes a child; "Philip is coming from Bethsaida to take me thither, that I may hear from his father Enoch, and from Zebedee, who hath just returned from the south, something further concerning this strange, new prophet of whom I told thee, who is preaching at the fords of the Jordan. I would know further this new doctrine of his that men should repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins."

A spasm of pain crossed the face of the sick man.

"Remission of sins," he murmured indistinctly, for he had well-nigh lost the power of speech. "What doth it mean? It can mean nothing for me, for who can forgive sins like mine?" and he turned his head away from Joanna, while tears of inexpressible bitterness welled painfully to his eyes.

The lady knew something of what he suffered, and understood that words could not avail to lessen

sorrow and remorse like his. She touched his forehead gently with her fingers for a moment in silence. As she left the room she turned and said :

“Seba will attend thee and may God grant thee peace. Who knoweth, Adriel, but this wilderness prophet may bring comfort even unto thee?”

There was only hopeless silence for answer, and the noble lady came out into the free air of the court with a sad countenance.

Followed by her maid, Joanna now passed through the streets of the city down to the broad and handsome quay, where she stood leaning against the marble parapet, looking with her keen, strong gaze up and down the line of boats moored below. Not finding the one sought, she lifted her head and looked out upon the sparkling waters of the lake, where she saw among the various craft with which it was all alive, a small boat without a sail, which was being pulled shoreward with long strokes by a man whom she recognized as Philip of Bethsaida.

A few moments sufficed for the boat to reach the quay and for the lady and her maid to take their places in it with cheerful greetings, for the joyous scene and the glorious air had dispelled the sadness with which Joanna had been burdened. Her escort, Philip, was the young Galilean who years

ago was associated with the son of Ithamar in Jerusalem. Time and experience had changed the freshness of his youthful looks; his eye was as bright as ever, but his face had now the character of developed manhood, and his manner was marked by a cheerfulness peculiarly wholesome and contagious. Enoch, the father of Philip, was a man of wealth and importance in their little city of Bethsaida, and although, like most of the dwellers there, their business was that of fishing, they carried it on through servants, not with their own hands as did most of their neighbors.

As the little boat sped northward across the blue waves, it passed on the left Magdala, with its limestone crags and caves behind which rose the height of Hattin, with its double crest. Then the roofs and towers of a city not less splendid than Tiberias, came into sight at the head of the lake, near the swift rushing of the Jordan's entrance. This was Bethsaida Julias, with its Roman villas and stately palaces, built by Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas, and named by him in honor of Julia, daughter of the emperor, as Tiberias had been named by Antipas for the emperor himself. Beyond the city, in the northern distance, the great snowcapped crest of Hermon lifted itself royally into the blue.

But it was not toward Bethsaida Julias, rising

in pearly tints through the morning mists, that Philip steered his boat. He kept a straight course along the western shore and, the wind being favorable, the busy little town of Capernaum was passed ere long, and the roofs of another humble fishing village, lying in the embrace of the rich plain, came into view, even Philip's native place, also called Bethsaida (the House of Fisheries).

On the shore, a short distance south of the village, overlooking a narrow valley through which ran a clear, rippling stream, stood a substantial dwelling of moderate size and pretension, surrounded with groves of fig and orange, the garden sloping down to a small cove at the point where the stream flowed into the lake ; here were moored a number of fishing boats, large and small. It was into this little harbor that Philip directed his boat, for here, at the house of Zebedee, Joanna was to visit and to meet other friends from Bethsaida and from Capernaum, a visit from the wealthy and noble lady of Tiberias being held a high distinction by the village folk.

It was plainly to be seen that they were expected. On the strip of sand at the water's edge stood a slender, fair-haired youth, who waved his hand to them in joyous welcome. His face was pure and glad, and his smile so bright that it brought a warm response from Joanna's lips.

"Surely," she exclaimed to Philip, "my cousin Zebedee is richly blessed in so fair and noble a son!"

"Yes," Philip made answer; "John is greatly beloved by all men who know him; yet I think not that his heart is truer or his courage firmer than that of James, albeit James hath a fiery temper."

"Thou sayest truly," murmured Joanna, speaking low, for at that moment the prow of the boat buried itself in the delicate white sand, and the youth named John sprang forward, ready to assist them in the landing. His brother, noticeably older than himself and of reserved and serious look, and their father Zebedee, a man of vigorous bearing, had followed him and now received their honored guest with all the ceremonious courtesy of their people.

At the entrance to the hospitable house they were met by Salome, the wife of Zebedee, a woman of gentle manner, the ardent brightness of whose eyes belied the calm reserve of her countenance with the suggestion of an eager and aspiring nature held under strong control by her own will. All a mother's pride leaped into her face when Joanna praised her son John and foretold for him great and good fortune.

"He is worthy, I myself believe, of the blessing

of Jehovah," she replied, with a sweet confidence which suited her well, and so saying she led her visitor into the house.

Among the friends and neighbors whom Joanna found assembled, was a man of striking face and figure, who was called Simon, and whose strong personality exerted a marked influence among them all. Between him and the younger son of Zebedee there seemed to exist, in spite of the difference in their ages, a peculiarly close sympathy, and yet no two men could have been more opposite in person, manner, and temperament. John, with his slender grace of form, the sensitive beauty of his face, and the bright and joyous look which was yet combined with a repose of spirit unusual in one so young, became almost womanlike of aspect when contrasted with the massive frame and impetuous power of his friend. Simon might have been ten years his elder, for there was nothing of youthful lightness in his muscular limbs, and his crag-like, overhanging brow bore marks of thought and care. The abundance of rough, dark hair and beard seemed to betoken the masterful and intensely masculine nature of the man; but in spite of his rude strength and the almost repellent sternness of his mouth, there was in his eyes a smile so winning that, once looking into them, men longed to look again. With him from their home

in Capernaum had come his brother Andrew, a man cast in a lesser mold, and also the young wife of Simon, Dorcas, and her mother.

An hour was passed by Salome and Joanna in pleasant discourse of kinsfolk and acquaintance, and tender mention was made of Mary of Nazareth, the sister of Salome ; of her widowhood, of the marriage of her daughters, and of her son, whose devotion made her life still sweet.

As the little company gathered in the inner court of the house a serious spirit fell upon them all. They had come to the house of Zebedee for one purpose : to hear what the good man could tell them of the strange prophet of God, whose preaching at the fords of Jordan was stirring the hearts of men through all the land.

During the past week the preacher had come to Bethabara on the southern border of Galilee, and Zebedee had gone with the father of Philip, and other men from Bethsaida, to hear him.

Eagerly the friends listened, as with fervent enthusiasm the fine old man recounted what he had seen and heard, and as he made an end of speaking, Simon broke out with the earnest exclamation :

“To-morrow I will go, even unto Jordan, and witness with mine own eyes the power of God through his prophet. What sayest thou, John? Wilt thou also go with me?”

"I will," John made answer; likewise said his brother James, also Philip, and Andrew the brother of Simon, and so it was agreed between them.

"Would to God," said Joanna sadly, "that the word of the prophet might come even unto Adriel also, that he might find some hope to lighten his darkness."

A sudden shadow seemed to fall upon the company with the mention of this name, and Simon, with an impatient frown, rose and left the room.

"Is there no change?" Salome asked, after a little time.

Joanna shook her head mournfully. "And we can expect none," she said; "his case is beyond the power of man to help."

It was at the sunset that Joanna entered the boat and was rowed back to Tiberias by Philip. Beyond the western hills, hidden from her sight, lay the little town of Nazareth in its green valley. Here, even at this hour, in a quiet home, a young man left his carpenter's bench and put away his tools as one who expected no more to use them. Then, taking his outer garments about him and his staff in his hand, he bent to kiss his mother, and so passed on alone, down from the sheltered valley to the highroad leading to the fords of Jordan and to the prophet of God.

It was the son of Mary.

CHAPTER III

Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple ; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts.—*Malachi.*

A RAPID, rushing river ; a desolate, rocky shore ; and as the swiftness of the river's flow and the sternness of the scarred rocks, so were the words of the son of Zacharias to the wondering people who had come out into the wilderness to hear him.

He stood as he spoke, upon a rough block of limestone near the edge of the torrent, and around him were gathered a great and motley throng of high degree and low, Sadducees and Pharisees from Jerusalem, who had followed him even here, publicans and soldiers, the simple country folk from their farms in Galilee, and from Tiberias curious and pleasure-loving Greeks ; women too, some of whom were outcasts and sinners.

A gaunt and rugged shape was that of the hermit of the Jordan ; no dweller in kings' houses this, no flexible time-server, no wearer of soft raiment, no lover of delicate food and wine. The sky had

been his roof, the rock his bed; the skin of the camel was his clothing; his fare was locusts and honey from the rocks; and from the grim and barren desert he had won the secret of its awful power—the bare unflinching truth which pierces straight to the heart of things.

“Who hath warned you?” he cried, and the voice of the wilderness rang clear and loud; “who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father,” and his eye sought out the proud faces of the Pharisees, “for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”

There was a murmur of amazement among the people as they heard these bold and startling words, and a young man who had thrown himself at the foot of the rock on which the preacher stood, looked up earnestly into his face with troubled eyes. It was John, the son of Zebedee.

There was a pause, while the speaker, with a grave smile, noted the effect of his words upon the motley company, and in that pause a stir began among the people, caused by the pressing forward of a number of men who wore the dress of priests and had plainly come from Jerusalem on a definite mission. Following them were several Judean

rabbis, among whom was Lazarus, of Bethany. These modestly held back among the people, but the priests, five in number, made their way even to the open space before the preacher, and the foremost of them announced their character and purpose.

"We have been sent from Jerusalem," he said, "from the elders of our people and the chief priests of the temple, to ask of thee somewhat concerning thyself."

The preacher John, whose composure revealed no surprise, far less confusion or anxiety, folded his arms across his breast and looking with his strong, keen glance fully into their faces said simply :

"Say on."

As brief as his answer came their first question :

"Who art thou?"

"I am not the Christ."

At these words the priests looked at one another with significant glances ; plainly this was not the answer they had expected—this bare, uncompromising disclaimer, and their leader stood for an instant irresolute.

"What then?" he exclaimed. "Art thou Elijah?"

"I am not."

Another moment of hesitation, and a rising

sense of being placed in an unexpected position by the free and fearless denial; then again came a question, this time in a more conciliating tone.

“Art thou that prophet of whom Moses wrote that the Lord our God would raise him up unto us and unto whom we should hearken?”

But John answered, “No.”

A slight impatience showed itself in the face of the priest.

“Who art thou then?” he cried, as if in challenge, “that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?”

Towering above them with a power which awed them all John made answer only:

“I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord.”

There was a whispered consultation in the group of priests and coming forward again the leader asked:

“Why baptizest thou then if thou be not the Christ, nor Elijah, neither the prophet of whom Moses wrote?”

“I baptize with water,” John answered them, and a light flashed from his eyes as if from some glorious inner knowledge, “but among you there even now standeth one mightier than I whom ye know not, who shall baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost. He, coming after me, is pre-

ferred before me. Nay, I say unto you, he was before me."

A great silence fell upon the people as John spake these words, and a thrill ran through men's hearts.

Again the flashing light in the eyes, as with arm outstretched and impassioned speech the preacher cried :

"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. When He shall come, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose, he will thoroughly cleanse the threshing-floor. The wheat shall he gather into his garner, but the chaff he shall burn with fire unquenchable!"

No man might stand before the fire of John's eyes and the burning flame of his utterance in a moment like this. Abashed, the deputation of the priests fell back into the crowd and made ready for their return to Jerusalem, but there was ill-concealed resentment in their faces. They had given this man an opportunity to ally his power to theirs, and he had rejected their attempt and scorned them as selfish and untrue. Henceforth there was enmity between him and them.

The young rabbi, Lazarus, however, was inclined to linger longer near the prophet, whose announcement of One coming had stirred the deepest long-

ings of his heart. The company had broken up, for the mighty man of God had withdrawn himself from their sight. Lazarus had taken notice of the young follower, the son of Zebedee, who had remained throughout the interview close beside the rock from which John had spoken, and approaching him now, he asked with the courtesy and polish of men of his rank :

“ Friend, art thou a follower of this prophet ? ”

The young Galilean, embarrassed by the address of a stranger of the position and refinement of the son of Ithamar, blushed as he answered yes.

“ Hath he many who come unto his baptism here in Galilee ? ”

“ Yea, verily. They come to him from all our villages on the lake ; from Nazareth and Cana also and from all the plain of Esdraelon. My father heard him first and was baptized of him, and now my brother and I have become his followers, and our friends from Bethsaida and Capernaum also.”

Lazarus looked with gentle sympathy into the pure, enthusiastic face of the younger man.

“ Knowest thou aught,” he asked in a lower voice than before, “ of *Him*, the one of whom he spake ? ”

John shook his head.

“ Not yet,” he answered ; “ the hour is coming when we shall see and know.”

“Believest thou this?”

Looking with eyes which shone with joy into the face of the stranger, John made answer simply :

“I know that the Messiah cometh.”

Meanwhile, in the desert solitude of the retreat to which he had withdrawn, the fearless preacher mused upon the coming mighty One whom he had declared to the priestly deputation, and whom, although they knew it not, he believed he had already seen. Again he recalled, as he had many times over in the past weeks, the simple but significant interview in which the Christ who was to come, and whom he had been sent to herald, had been made known to him.

It had been at the close of day and the people had scattered to their homes, leaving him alone among the desolate rocks of Bethabara, when there had come to him, whence he saw not, a young man who had quietly asked baptism at his hands. Rising from his resting-place with a question as to true repentance on his lips, John had approached the stranger and looking upon him had beheld with keen, prophetic vision what he had never seen before in a human face, the light of a sinless soul. The question had died upon his lips. Worn and weary with the sense of his own sin and the sins of his people, he had cried out :

“I have need to be baptized of thee, whosoever thou art, that hast not known sin ; and comest thou to me ?”

Words and look were with authority divinely sweet as the stranger had given answer :

“Suffer it to be so now ;” and John had been irresistibly impelled to obey him.

Amid the gathering shadows they passed together down the lonely shore and stepped into the cold waves of Jordan’s swelling stream. John knew not why, but he who feared not the wild beasts of the desert nor the wrath of kings, trembled as he went beside the stranger deeper and deeper into the darkly flowing river ; yet it was not fear but a kind of awe which made him tremble, and the sense was upon him that though they were to go side by side even to where the floods of the deep waters should overwhelm them, he should fear no evil.

Then, midway of the stream they stood, and John baptized the stranger, and lo, as they came up out of the water the heavens above them opened and the sign was given, the sign before appointed, for the Spirit in semblance as a dove descended and rested upon His head, and a voice from the open heavens was heard, saying :

“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.”

Then John had known that this was in very truth the Son of God who should come into the world; and as they reached the shore again he had fallen at the feet of the Holy One to worship. But immediately he had departed. His face glorified and full of joy, and his head lifted as if he still heard the voice, strangely, swiftly he had gone, as if driven by some power beyond himself.

And where was he now? John mused; and when would he return to his sight? Oh, that his eyes might once again look upon the majestic sweetness of that face, that he might point the sinful souls who sought baptism unto him. Then would he be content and gladly know his mission fulfilled.

CHAPTER IV

The tempter came . . . unto him.—*St. Matthew.*

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.—*Isaiah.*

In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. . . Once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.—*Hebrews.*

THE day following being the Sabbath, the multitude did not leave their homes to flock to the preaching of John at the Jordan, and the morning was one of calm and rest to the prophet in the wilderness. There was beauty even in the stern landscape of the Jordan valley that spring morning under the cloudless arch of the sky; and standing with two of his closest followers, young John of Bethsaida, and Andrew, the brother of Simon, the son of Zacharias communed with his own heart in a spirit gentler than his wont. There was no carping Sadducee or hypocritical Pharisee present to stir his wrath that day, no wretched outcast to arouse his indignant pity, but only the clean, wide sky, the unchangeable rocks, the living, purifying flood of the river, and by his

side the two young souls, simple, sincere, and steadfast.

Standing thus, the prophet was all at once aware of a figure approaching them, coming from the south, and as it drew nearer he perceived that it was that of a young man, of perhaps thirty years, who wore the dress of a rabbi, and above his garments of white linen, a mantle or abba of rough blue cloth. The form was erect and fine, the movement of the limbs free and vigorous, betokening a highland Galilean, rather than a dweller in the cities of Judea, and something of majesty invested the whole appearance, stirring to life in John's heart a thrill of recognition. Was not this the One for whom he waited?

But the face! Surely this was not the face of the strange visitor whom he had baptized and upon whom he had seen the Spirit fall, for that was filled with unclouded joy and peace ineffable, the effluence of a spotless soul upon which the shadow of sin had not fallen. That face was young, radiant, beautiful, as it had been the face of one of God's angels, strong and high.

And this? As the man approached a great and awful wonder fell upon the prophet, for he perceived that it was indeed the same face, but that a change had passed upon it such as might make angels weep.

What meant it, this woe-worn and sorrow-stricken countenance, pure indeed as before, but with a purity won through conflict? What meant the mute, pathetic yearning in the eyes, the patient submission of the mouth in place of its joyous radiance?

Then was it made known to John that this, the spotless One, had encountered the powers of darkness, had looked upon sin, had known the abhorrent enticement of temptation, for the sake of those whom he had come to save. He had been made sin, who knew no sin; had suffered, being tempted, that he might take upon himself and bear the iniquity of the children of men.

It was the great moment in the life of God's greatest prophet. Divine purity and the hideous taint of sin lay bare before his eyes, and the wondrous offering of God's own Son, was revealed to him as the fulfilling of the type of the paschal sacrifice. Touching his young followers with his hand, he cried:

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

And what followed?

They too had watched the approach of the strange wayfarer; they too had seen the veiled but surpassing beauty of his face, and had felt their hearts drawn out to him in nameless yearning.

Was not this the very Christ? And then he had turned and looked upon them, and when they caught the divine attraction of his look they followed him without a word as he passed on up the rugged valley. They could not have stayed behind.

Seeing them following he asked, "What seek ye?" They made answer with timid eagerness, "Master, where dwellest thou?" He replied, "Come and see." And they went on after him.

Alone, the prophet stood gazing after them with tear-dimmed eyes.

"It is over," he said to himself, "the day of my visitation! No more to see him! Nevermore on earth shall I hear his voice; and those who loved me will return no more unto me! What further wait I for, for who cometh after the king? The purpose of my life is fulfilled, and the hour of my departure must be near."

Stretching forth his brown sinewy arms, he continued:

"My hand is steady and life is strong within me; my heart beats full and firmly, and death seems afar off, but it will not be long in coming. It may come in fire, or in the river's depth, or at the keen edge of the sword. I know not, but this I see, that it is coming quickly. Amen. Even so let it be."

CHAPTER V

O thou hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a sojourner in the land, and as a way-faring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?—*Jeremiah*.

IT was noonday, and on the highroad leading northward into Galilee two men were walking slowly in the heat and dust. In the distance the roofs of a small village, where they hoped to buy bread, were shining in the sun. They were Simon Peter of Capernaum, and John, the son of Zebedee; their brothers, Andrew and James, had remained behind a little distance, under some wayside palm trees with their new master, even him whom John had declared unto them two days before, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary.

As they walked on, in earnest talk, they saw a man approaching them from the village, and as they came near they discovered that it was Philip, their friend, whom they most wished to see. They hailed him with joy, being greatly surprised, and his greeting was as warm as theirs.

“Surely this is a strange thing,” he exclaimed with whole-hearted gladness, turning back with them, “that I who came to seek you yonder at the

fords of the river, should meet you here. I came to bid you to the marriage of our friend Seth of Cana, the brother of Nathanael, and I find you, it would seem, already on the way."

Then they eagerly told him what had befallen them, and how they had found him to whom John the Baptist bare record that he was the Messiah. They told Philip that he had received them with most gracious kindness, and had shared his tent with them the night before, and had eaten and drunk with them.

"Yet notwithstanding all this," Simon Peter said, "though he is the carpenter's son from Nazareth, poor and humble like ourselves, he seemed to me more exalted than any king could be, however great. His kingship is in himself, and no man could make bold to be free with him beyond his wish."

"And oh, Philip!" exclaimed John ardently, "the joy of his presence is beyond words to tell. His look is divine; it is love made manifest. How shall we be able ever to leave him and go back to our common life?"

"Would that I too might be so blessed, as you whom he hath asked to company with him," said Philip wistfully.

"I believe that it will be even so," replied John. "We all desire it for thee."

“But what think ye?” Philip asked, as they entered the village now and went about their errand, “might it be that we could dare ask him to come with us unto the marriage? Never could we so approach the Baptist; his thoughts lay far away from the joys and cares of our daily lives.”

“The Nazarene is not as the hermit of Jordan; the spirit of John is stern and dwells apart from other men, and his words are piercing like a sword,” Simon answered; “but it is not so with him to whom we bring thee. He is lofty and yet more gentle than a woman; and never can I tell the grace of his kindness toward us whom he made his guests. I could not refrain last night, but wept when he ministered to our needs. Humbly he did it, as if he had been a servant, and yet we knew him to be our king.”

“Ah, Simon,” exclaimed Philip, “thy very words stir me strangely; what will it be when I see his face?” and in spite of the strength of his young manhood, tears had risen to Philip’s eyes.

Then presently, returning to the group beneath the palm trees, Peter and John brought Philip to the Master, and trembling with the wish to win like favor with his friends, the young man stood and looked upon the face of Jesus. Though so much had been told him, he marveled greatly, for he had not known that a human face could have

in it an aspect so divine. Yet the beauty and majesty of the Nazarene were of a sort that only those whose hearts sought purity and goodness might desire ; men of low and evil purpose turned away, finding nothing in him.

“ Follow me.”

With joy unspeakable Philip heard the words, spoken with the quiet authority which assumes nothing because it possesses all ; and from that noontide hour under the palm tree on the dusty highroad, Philip of Bethsaida held himself a true and loyal disciple of Jesus, the Master.

As they walked on after their hour of rest, John, who had won a certain nearness to the Master beyond the rest, told him of the marriage two days hence of their friend in Cana, only an hour's journey north of Nazareth ; and that his father and mother, Zebedee and Salome, would be there, many also from Nazareth and from the country about ; and that he earnestly desired that Jesus would go thither with them. To John's surprise Jesus seemed to have known before of this marriage, for he said that his mother too would be there and he would willingly go. This he said with gracious kindness, not as if he condescended, but as if their interest was his also.

With gladness which they could not restrain, they all received this, and thought and spoke freely

of their joy in bringing Jesus face to face with their kinsfolk and friends. But Philip said :

“Now I must leave you for a little space and hasten on before unto Cana, that I may see Nathanael and bid him make ready for our coming, for it is in his house that we must lodge.”

To the hearty vigor of Philip the journey of ten miles was but a light and easy task, and the lighter for the happiness with which his generous heart was glowing, and which irradiated all that he looked upon. Never had he found such beauty in the familiar landscape. Leaving Nain, the road led north into the highlands, and as he climbed the base of Mount Tabor and looked westward toward the ocean, a strange delight thrilled him, for he caught sight of the white walls of Nazareth nestled among the hills, and remembered that it was there that the Master, Jesus, had been living all these silent years.

The sun was still high when he entered the little mountain town of Cana and made his way speedily to the house of his friend Nathanael. In the narrow street were many coming and going, for all the village was alive with preparation for the festivities which were to begin on the morrow, and the air was merry with laughter and singing ; but the house of Nathanael, who was brother to the bridegroom, was quiet, and through its open

door Philip entered unannounced as a familiar friend and found not even the servants.

Passing through the house he looked into the pleasant garden where the pomegranate and fig trees with their young and tender leaves made grateful shade. Still he saw no one.

“Nathanael!” he called.

At the sound of his voice a man somewhat older than himself emerged from the green shadow of the fig trees at the lower end of the garden and advanced up the path with a cordial smile and gesture of greeting. It was Nathanael. He was a man of fine countenance and of dignified bearing, a devout man, pure in heart, and given to prayer and meditation on the things of God.

He welcomed Philip with large-hearted hospitality, and would have taken him at once into one of the chambers made ready for the guests in his house.

“Wait,” said Philip, “I have something to tell thee. I am come on before our company; the sons of Zebedee with Simon and Andrew are following me.”

“That is well,” said Nathanael smiling; “they are expected.”

“And with them, my brother, one is coming to the marriage whom thou hast not expected.”

And now Nathanael perceived a significant ear-

nestness in Philip's voice and in his face which quickened his attention.

"Nathanael," he continued, "we have found him of whom Moses did write in the law, of whom also the prophets spake, and it is Jesus of Nazareth, the son of the carpenter Joseph who died there some years ago. It may be that thou knewest him."

Again Nathanael smiled, a little incredulous at so strange a statement, thinking within himself that it could hardly be that the Messiah, the king of Israel, could spring from among his simple Galilean fellow-countrymen, and knowing that his birth was foretold to take place in Bethlehem, the city of David, in distant Judea.

"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" he asked.

Philip said unto him: "Come and see."

CHAPTER VI

I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death ;
A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself ;
A land of the shadow of death, without any order.

—*Job.*

THE hour was late; the town of Bethany lay still and sleeping under the shoulder of Mount Olivet, its houses and gardens bathed by the silver light of the paschal moon. In one white-walled mansion set deep in its rich garden just where the road from Jerusalem entered the little town, a light still shone out through the deep embrasure of the windows. This light proceeded from a lamp suspended by silver chains from a pillar within the inner court, and its soft rays fell full upon the figure of a woman, beautiful and young, who was bending over a parchment intently studying. For the rest, the house was still and dark, for it was far into the night.

The beauty of the reader was of an unusual order. The forehead was low and wide at the temples, the brows level, the eyes large, gray, dove-like; the nose straight and delicate, suggested the Greek ideal, but the mouth was lacking in the

sensuous perfection which belongs to this type; the lips were not full and they had a sorrowful downward curve at the corners, giving a strange pathos to the face. The clear pallor of the cheeks contrasted with the dark, cloudlike masses of hair which, parted low upon the forehead, were held by a fillet of gold about the head, and fell in a loosened braid below the waist.

The strongest charm of this face, however, lay in its expression; it was at once proud and sad, dreamy and intense, tender and brilliant—the face of a poet, a mystic, or a queen. The graceful poise of the head resembled that of Rhoda, the wife of Ithamar, and this maiden was her child Mary. Her loose and flowing robe, confined at the waist by a girdle made of links of gold, was of soft white wool, with a border of fine needlework in many colors. Beside her, on the soft carpet spread for warmth above the mosaic floor, lay a pair of little sandals cunningly embroidered, and the small white feet were bare.

Far above her head the sky itself, splendid with the Syrian stars, arched over the open court. Ere long Mary lifted her eyes and looked up into the shining reaches with passionate longing.

“How are the dead raised?” she murmured softly, as if repeating words which she had read or heard, “and with what body do they come?”

A little pause and again she spoke : " If a man die shall he live again ? There is no answer. The stars shine in the heavens, but their light is cold and pitiless as it hath ever been, and in vain the children of men beat up with struggling spirits against them ; they answer not nor change. Men are born and die as do the beasts, and none cometh back to tell if there be aught beyond but nothingness. What are we ? What is our life ? Why do we love, since love means only pain ?

" For there is hope of a tree,
If it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
But man dieth, and wasteth away :
Yea, man giveth up the ghost,
And where is he ?
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.

" Who can say that Jehovah careth for his people or that the Most High hath compassion ? My father was brave and noble and gave all, even life itself, for his nation, but it was all in 'vain ; he fell, done to death by the false Adriel and the cruel king. My mother was beautiful and holy, but she lived only long enough to die broken-hearted. And Ephraim, my prince, my love, my life itself, upon him too fell the awful blight ; the arrows of the Almighty pierced him, and he is gone.

“Death is all we know ; that alone is sure ; and against it all my soul recoils in dread unspeakable. Shall these eyes stare unseeing, these lips grow stiff and cold, this tongue refuse to speak, the brain turn to a clod, the heart to stone? Shall all this be to me, who to-night breathe and see and feel and long for life, and hate and fear and shrink from death? Oh, if God is good, why does he suffer a man to be born, appointed unto death?”

A silence like death itself was upon the sleeping house, and Mary rose from her place, her slender form trembling with the stress of her feeling. At that moment she heard a knock at the outer entrance to the house, a gentle knocking thrice repeated. Instantly the painful tension of form and face relaxed, and a happy light rose in her eyes. Slipping her feet into the sandals, she unfastened the lamp from its chains, and taking it in her right hand while she gathered her robe in the left, she hastened through the vaulted passage which led to the door and unbarred it.

“Welcome home,” she said softly, as the door opened and a man entered, travel-worn, as if from a hard journey, but smiling with his tired eyes as he saw who it was that opened the door for him.

The man was Lazarus.

Quietly she ministered to his necessities, and when face and feet had been bathed, and the dusty

garments had been laid aside, her brother, refreshed though weary, reclined upon a couch to partake of the bread and dates which she had brought him. Mary took her place by his side and watched him silently with loving eyes.

“How noble and beautiful he is!” she was thinking. “His forehead is white and high and fit to wear a crown, and his eyes look deeper into things than the eyes of other men, and yet how gentle they are, how good! He is left unto us still, else would we indeed be desolate. Must it not be that there is hope for our nation while such men as he still think for it, and hope and pray?”

Having satisfied his hunger, Lazarus turned and looked into the fair face of Mary with a tender smile, in which a brother's and a father's love were mingled.

“Little sister,” he said, stretching out his firm, white hand, a scholar's hand, and smoothing her hair, “thou shouldest not have watched for me thus into the night; thou art pale and weary. Thou hast been busy with my books again I see, and that too is little gain to thee, I fear.”

For answer she only laid her soft cheek against the back of his hand which she had caught in hers. He saw that her eyes were full of tears.

“The same old questionings come back, do they, my child?” he asked gravely.

“Yes,” she answered low; “and no one can answer them. But let us not think of them now, my brother; thou hast told me naught of thy journey. Didst thou see the strange prophet?”

“Yes. He is stern and grand, and the spirit of our God is upon him.”

“What saith he of himself? Doth he claim to be Messiah?” and the eyes of Mary kindled with eagerness.

“Nay, he claims nothing for himself. He said that he was not the Christ, calling himself naught but a voice, a herald of One coming. But, my sister, he saith that he who is to come will come right quickly; yea, he saith that he standeth among us even now.”

“Dost thou believe this?”

There was no reply for a little space and then Lazarus made answer musingly:

“I met a youth there at the Jordan—a wonderful face he had, pure and loving as that of a child—who believed, and believing, rejoiced.”

“Lazarus, if Messiah cometh, and leadeth our people forth against the Romans, wilt thou follow in his train?”

“Dost thou ask that question, Mary,” said her brother gently chiding, “of the son of Ithamar?”

CHAPTER VII

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto the Lord offerings in righteousness.—*Malachi*.

IT was the eve of the Passover and the streets of Jerusalem were filled with eager throngs pressing in and out of the entrances to the temple. At the gates and on the bridges men had need to force their way, so dense was the crowd, for the day was now far spent; the preparations for the feast must all be made within the few hours following, and the lamb for each household must be slain in the court of the priests. But with all the haste and excitement there was good cheer and gladness of heart on every side.

Mingling with the well-dressed and polished citizens were hundreds of strangers from Judea and from Galilee, both town and country folk, and hospitable invitations to come and partake of the feast might be heard continually; for every man kept his house open that night and made ready to fill his table

Across the royal bridge from the height of Mount Zion, lights and banners were streaming from the great palace of Herod, and all the people knew that this signified the presence of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who had come down from Cæsarea, according to custom, a few days before, to overlook the city during Passover week. The Roman authorities kept a suspicious eye on these great gatherings of the Jewish people, knowing that the enormous concourse of pilgrims was but too likely to excite the hardly slumbering national feeling, and lead to conspiracy and riot.

Twilight was falling when two men, an aged and white-haired councillor and a young rabbi, both of marked distinction in person and bearing, left the temple court by the gate Shushan and made their way over the covered bridge crossing the Kedron. They were preceded by a man-servant who bore upon his shoulders the paschal lamb, newly slain, with the two splinters of pomegranate wood thrust, the one lengthwise the other transversely, into its flesh. As they passed under the shadows of some great trees on the border of the garden called Gethsemane at the base of Mount Olivet, the whiteness of these wooden splints across the slain lamb gleamed out sharply, and the younger man—it was Lazarus of Bethany—remarked :

“Seest thou the shape of the splints on the

lamb yonder? They are in the exact form of the Roman cross of condemnation, the sign of shame and death. Didst thou ever note it before, my father?"

"I see it plainly now, my son," his companion made answer; "but why doth it awaken thy attention?"

"I know not, verily," rejoined Lazarus thoughtfully. "It is a slight matter, and yet I cannot lose it from my eye, having now once seen it."

The old man by the side of Lazarus was Joseph, the councillor from Arimathea, the faithful friend of Ithamar. In all the years since the death of his friend, Joseph had shown himself a father to Lazarus and his sisters, and through his efforts and those of Elon, the chamberlain, long since dead, a large portion of the property of Ithamar had, after the banishment of Archelaus, been restored to his children. They had, however, maintained their home in Bethany, since Jerusalem could never lose its painful associations to them. Bethany was in reality a suburb of the holy city, and as such the family of Lazarus might partake of the Passover feast in their own house. Joseph had come in from Arimathea to keep the feast and to be their guest to-night.

They had now reached the Galilean encampment, pitched to the north of the olive garden on

the southern road to Bethany. Tents and huts of branches, covered with mats, had here been placed on every available spot by the pilgrims from the northern province. The camp formed a strange and picturesque scene in the gathering dusk, with its blazing fires and its groups of men, women, and children, all of whom were eagerly engaged in preparing the Passover meal. As they skirted the lower edge of the encampment, both Joseph and Lazarus scanned the rows of tents and the groups of men with peculiar intentness. When they had passed the last straggling abode Joseph said :

“I saw no man resembling *him*, the Galilean who was in the temple this morning. Didst thou?”

“No. I think that he was not there.”

Then they walked on in silence, each absorbed in his own thought, but conscious that their thoughts were bent on the same theme.

Half an hour brought them to the pleasant home of Lazarus and even at the door Joseph was greeted with cordial affection by a matron of noble face and gracious manner, Martha, the elder sister of Lazarus, for many years a widow, and the keeper of their home. Within the house Mary was waiting to receive them, and coming forward she greeted her father's friend with a sweet reserve and reverence, differing widely from Martha's frank hospitality, and yet not less true-hearted.

But there were tears in the eyes of both the sisters as they looked into the kind, grave face of the councillor, for all the past was ever with them, and a shadow hung over their house which had never lifted since the tragic death of Ithamar and Rhoda. Well he knew their thoughts, for his own heart ached as the tender memories which ever clustered about the paschal feast crowded thick and fast upon him, and in the forms of their children he seemed again to see the noble and dauntless friend of his own youth, and his fair and joyous wife.

But Martha, breaking through the tension of emotion which was likely to master them all, asked some questions about the hour for the feast and hastened out to give orders concerning the preparation of the lamb which the servant had brought in.

When she returned to the court where her sister sat with Lazarus and Joseph, Martha found the three in eager conversation concerning something which had taken place in the city during the day. Listening for a moment, and finding herself unable to gather a clear idea of the matter, she interrupted them with an energetic demand that they should enlighten her.

“Ah! dear brother,” said Mary, “begin now when thou first sawest the stranger on the bridge and tell it all, for I would have Martha know even

the least of what ye have seen. There will be time, I am sure, before the supper is ready for us."

Then Lazarus began, and spoke as follows :

"It was in the early hours of the day that I was making my way across the great bridge to the temple, with many others, when my eyes fell upon a young man who stood leaning against the parapet not far from me, gazing motionless at the temple. I saw that he was a rabbi, for his tallith bore the blue and white tassels, but I was sure that he was not of Jerusalem, and guessed that he had come from Galilee.

"Now there was naught noteworthy in the fact that a young Galilean teacher, who looked perhaps for the first time since his childhood on the glories of the temple, should stand spellbound at the sight of its splendors of marble and gold glittering in the sunshine of such a morning, but there was somewhat in this man's face which startled me. It was not with wonder and admiration that he looked, but there was a depth of sadness, even of pity, in his eyes that stirred me strangely. As I drew nearer I marveled yet more at the majestic beauty and elevation of his face. Years ago," and here Lazarus spoke slowly, and as if to himself rather than to the little circle about him, "one day, on the terrace of the temple, I saw the face of

a lad—but that is not to the purpose ; let me go on with what I have to tell you.

“I passed on slowly, thinking it not courteous to look over-long at the stranger, and yet I was fain to linger, for never was I so drawn to a living man as I found myself to him. Thus I entered the outer court and had passed on to the foot of the steps of the Beautiful Gate where, among the many coming and going, I met our friend Joseph, and we stood talking together and looking upon the scene. You know what the court of the Gentiles is on the day before the Passover since the bazaars of the sons of Annas have been opened there for the traffic in sheep and cattle.”

“Yea, and in doves,” added Joseph with a touch of sarcasm ; “the high priest doeth a most excellent business in the breeding and sale of doves for burnt offerings. He is careful to keep that matter in his own hands.”

“Thou sayest truly,” replied Lazarus ; “under him our temple court hath fallen to being a noisy and vulgar market, where men haggle over the price of sheep and oxen and forget to make mention of the Lord of the temple.

“So then, this is what came to pass. While we stood watching the unhallowed scene, but thinking not at all that we could lift a voice to protest against the shame of it, we were startled by a

sudden movement among the people and beheld a man, who with a scourge of many thongs in his hand and a fiery and noble indignation before which no man nor beast could stand, was driving out from the court the oxen and sheep, that hurried before him in a huddling herd, as if they knew they had no right to be there. Nor were they more abject than their owners, for the men who were selling as well as those who were buying, stood by in sullen submission, and no one opposed the stranger in his fearless and searching work, for he made the place clean before he paused.

“When he came nigh to the steps where we stood, I perceived to my great amazement that this man before whom all the people quailed, and who had dared denounce the temple authorities in his action, was no prominent priest or ruler, as I had surmised, but the self-same rabbi, the young Galilean whom I had noticed an hour before upon the bridge. But when I saw his face and gesture I wondered no more at the fashion in which man and beast yielded before him; authority, power, and fearless purpose were there as I never yet beheld them in any man. What it meaneth I cannot understand.

“But this was not all. When the crowding, hurrying droves of cattle had taken themselves out of sight, he went on and, with a calmness which



THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

was yet like the white heat of a righteous wrath, overturned the money changers' tables so that their hoarded coins rolled clinking over the pavement, and the traders scrambled after them like greedy animals.

"It was now that I noticed that the great cages of doves around the inner walls of the bazaars were still left, having either escaped the notice of this stranger, or having been purposely left out of respect to Annas, since every one knows that he controls the sale of all the doves for temple purposes. But no, I was mistaken. In another instant, for it all was done with a swiftness which took our very breath, he had turned to the men who sell the doves, and then it was for the first time that we heard his voice.

"'Take these things hence,' he cried, and his voice rang like a trumpet through all the court; 'make not my Father's house a house of merchandise! Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? But ye have made it a den of thieves.'"

"The man hath more than human courage, my brother," said Martha, "or else he is possessed of some strange spirit. Did no man question him concerning his action?"

"Surely. It could hardly pass without question. Even as he stood watching the men remove the

cages, for these too obeyed him at once, unresisting, a number of our rulers who stood by with some of the priests, approached him, and we heard them ask him, 'What sign shewest thou, seeing that thou doest these things?'

"How answered he?" asked Mary. Lazarus paused a little while before replying.

"His answer was the strangest part of all; thinkest thou not so, Joseph?"

The councillor assented; perplexity and anxiety were to be seen in his face.

"'Destroy this temple,' he said, 'and in three days I will raise it up.'"

Amazed, the sisters exclaimed: "What could this signify?"

"The rulers too were greatly astonished, and seeing him to be a Galilean and a stranger, they told him that our temple was forty and six years in building, and demanded what he could mean by saying he would rear it in three days."

"What said he then?" asked Martha.

"Nothing in words, but I saw from his look that he had not meant it in the sense in which they spake."

"But what thinkest thou could be his meaning?" asked Joseph.

"I cannot tell; but of this I am sure: as his action was greater and truer than the actions of

other men, even so was his thought. It was high; I cannot attain unto it."

"Didst thou learn the man's name, my brother?" asked Martha.

"Some one said that it was Jesus, and that he is a carpenter's son from Nazareth."

At this moment the doors were opened into the hall of guests, and the paschal supper was declared ready. As they arose, Joseph said, with solemn emphasis :

"One thing at least is fixed. Whoever this rabbi may be, and whatever his purpose, he hath to-day, at his first appearance in Jerusalem, opened a breach between himself and Annas, the high priest, which can never be healed; and who can say how it shall end?"

CHAPTER VIII

He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass :
As showers that water the earth.

— *The Psalms.*

EIGHT months had passed. Withdrawing from the fierce glare of curiosity and criticism which followed the cleansing of the temple at the Passover, the Master had worked quietly in the country regions of Judea, and in some measure had taken up the work of preaching in the regions beyond the Jordan, laid down by John the Baptist.

For the son of Zacharias was in prison. Away to the east, where the fortress palace of Machærus overlooked from its frowning crags the desolation of the Dead Sea, the free, unfettered prophet of the wilderness, the comrade of the eagle and the wild beast, sat alone, pent within the stifling darkness of a narrow cell. Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, true son of him misnamed the Great, being reproved by the fearless preacher for his sinful alliance with the wife of his brother Philip, had added yet this to all the many evils of his long and evil reign, that he had shut up John in prison.

It had been a dark and shameful story : the meeting in Rome of Antipas—married for many years to the Arabian princess, daughter of King Aretas—and of his half-brother Philip, who had brought with him his beautiful wife Herodias, the Asmonæan princess, niece to both the kings. Then there had followed the sudden flaming up of a powerful, secret attraction between Antipas and the wife of Philip, the deliberate plan to break the marriage bonds that held them both, the rupture of all their obligations, and the life following of luxurious, feverish passion and indulgence.

“ *It is not lawful for thee to have her !* ” Stern and inflexible was the utterance of John ; no shading down of truth to meet the needs of personal safety. It was enough. For a man of this sort Antipas knew no safer place than the dungeon of Machærus. There let the preacher, over-bold, have time for reflection, while the reckless gayeties of the tarnished court went on.

Throughout Galilee and all the land the excitement was great, for the people trusted John, knowing him to be a just and a righteous man and a great prophet ; yet, such was the cruel tyranny of Antipas, no man durst raise hand or voice in his behalf. It was the beginning of the end which John himself had been the first to foresee.

Again it was morning on the sea of Galilee, and

still there lay in the house of Chuza, the royal steward of Tiberias, the paralytic whom Joanna, his wife, had befriended—Adriel, in happier days the hope and charge of the noble Ithamar. Brief and unsavory had been the story of his life. After his arrest by the officers of Archelaus, to whom he had been betrayed as a Pretender by the perfidy of his companion, Sebastien, he had fretted out two years in prison. Then, Coponius coming into power as procurator after the banishment of Archelaus, he had been released, and again his life lay in his own hands to make or mar.

Hopeless now of attaining to any political power in Judea, and dreading contact with the family of Ithamar, whom he had so fatally betrayed, if he remained in Jerusalem, Adriel departed to the North, and visiting the new cities of Philip and Antipas, the Roman luxury of which strongly attracted his pleasure-loving nature, he became a hanger-on of courts and of rich men's tables, establishing a vague and scantily acknowledged relationship to Herodias herself through his strain of Asmonæan blood. For many years he led a life of wild dissipation, the unworthy, debasing career of the parasite of an immoral court, until his strong frame gave way under long-continued excesses, and he became an utter wreck in body, falling a victim to paralysis. It was at this crisis

of his life that the worthy Joanna, to whom he had long been known, in the large benevolence of her heart took him into her own home in Tiberias and cared for him.

But as he lay helpless, the mind of Adriel, clearer than in his days of health, beheld ever before it the vision of his wasted youth, his degrading indulgences, his treachery to the noble friends of his earlier days, his servile crawling before the heartless courtiers of Herodias, and all the manhood in him was turned to a bitter agony of remorse.

On this day, Philip of Bethsaida, who, having known Adriel in the days of his own school life in Jerusalem, had always befriended him with sturdy loyalty, had rowed down to Tiberias, and entering the house of Joanna, had been ushered into the presence of his friend. The haggard eyes of the sick man brightened a little as they rested upon the kindly face and stalwart form of his friend, and the white lips murmured a few words of greeting. Joanna had entered with Philip and they both found places beside Adriel's bed.

"I have good tidings of which to tell thee to-day," Philip began in his strong, cheerful voice, which seemed to bring all the freshness and freedom of the outer world into the darkened chamber; "the Master of whom I have so often told thee,

who was with John beyond Jordan, hath returned to Galilee, after spending all these many months in Judea, in which, as thou knowest, I have seen and heard naught concerning him."

"Yea, I remember what thou hast said of him, of what he wrought at Cana, at the marriage, and all that," returned Adriel, with the weary indifference of sickness.

"But I have something new to tell thee to-day, great things and wonderful. The whole country is full of the fame of him. Coming north he went first to Nazareth, where he was brought up, and when he spake in the synagogue there, the people wondered greatly at his words and at the power with which he spake. Nevertheless, being ever a churlish and a jealous folk there in Nazareth, they were angered because he made mention of the favor which Jehovah hath shown in times past unto the Gentiles, and they rose up and thrust him out of their city."

"That must have been before he came into Capernaum," remarked Joanna, whose animated face showed her keen interest in Philip's story.

"Ah, thou knowest then of these things!" exclaimed Philip.

"I have seen Simon."

"Then hast thou of a surety heard of what hath come to pass in his family."

“Nay, it was two weeks ago that I saw him, and I know only that Simon hath invited the Nazarene to tarry in his house at Capernaum, and that the people come to him continually both to hear his words and to receive healing.”

“If thou couldst only have been there on the Sabbath just passed!”

“Oh, tell us all, for I long to hear, and to have Adriel know from thy lips that what I have only heard, thou hast seen in very truth.”

“Indeed,” began Philip, “it was a great day. In the morning we were all in the synagoge and he spake unto us, and with what grace and power I cannot describe. His teaching is not that of our scribes and rabbis; he speaks with authority and power as if he was greater even than the law and the prophets, and yet he is the gentlest man I ever knew. Now, while he was yet speaking, a man in the company, who hath oftentimes before this been possessed by an unclean spirit, cried out, being overcome by the demon: ‘Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth!’ and further confessed him as the Holy One of God.

“We looked for confusion after such an outbreak, for the unclean spirit was exceeding fierce and the man had given himself over to it wholly; but—what thinkest thou, Adriel?—calmly and

undisturbed, and yet with a severity which made men tremble, the Master commanded the spirit. 'Hold thy peace,' he said sternly, 'and come out of him!' Instantly the demon threw the man upon the floor there before us all, but without hurt, and it came out of him, and left him quiet and at peace and clear in mind as a little child."

Adriel closed his eyes, and a great wave of anguish from the depths of his own tortured soul passed over his face. Philip marked it, but continued speaking as before.

"At the close of the reading in the synagogue, the Master went into Simon's house, and entering in he found that the mother of Dorcas, his wife—thou knowest, Joanna, how excellent a woman she is—was stricken suddenly with fever exceeding great, so that those who were caring for her were much afraid, and the whole household was in sore distress."

"Wert thou with them in the house?" asked Joanna.

"Yes, I followed the Master from the synagogue; once with him I feel that I cannot leave his presence. So I was with him in the court when the women came to him, and besought him to tell them what they might do for the mother of Dorcas, for he alone is always calm when all others are in uncertainty and fear. He followed them directly

into her chamber, and I heard him speak. His voice was low and very quiet, but with that strange, irresistible tone which I can never hear without an inner trembling, and yet not severe as when he commanded the demon. He was gone only a few moments, and when he returned, she that was fever-stricken followed him, restored and strong as before. I saw how she loved him, although she spake little; but she went about to bring him food and fresh garments and water for his feet, as if in ministering to him she found joy beyond words."

"How should she not?" murmured Joanna, with tears in her eyes. "Thinkest thou not, my Adriel, that such a one could make thee whole again, if thou couldest but come into his presence? Surely he would have compassion on such suffering as thine."

The blinding tears and speechless misery of Adriel witnessed to his conviction that he was unworthy to ask or receive so great a grace.

"Then at even, when the sun was setting," Philip continued gently, "all the people of Capernaum who had any sick in their houses, hearing of his wondrous healing, brought them unto him, and he laid his hands on every one of them, and they were made whole.

"I could but marvel at the tender compassion

which he showeth unto every form of sickness, even unto leprosy, which all other men loathe as corruption itself; for in his own frame is no taint of weakness or disease, nor ever hath been. He is without spot or blemish; his body is strong and pure; and he can endure this unceasing labor without complaint or impatience. Grave and thoughtful is he, and yet there is a joyous power and radiance in him which it seemeth to me doth ever flow to all men who meet him and lift them up. Yes, my Adriel, there is good hope even for thee, for not once have I seen the Master turn one away, whatever his state might be."

Philip arose now to go, and when he had taken leave of Adriel, in whose saddened face he saw a faint ray of the hope he had come to bring him, Joanna followed him out into the court.

"Simon must count himself happy," she said, "that the Master hath consented to tarry in his house. Would that it were in mine!"

"Even so he does. And knowest thou that he and Andrew, and also the sons of Zebedee, both James and John, have been chosen by him to be with him wholly as his disciples, according to the custom of our rabbis? They have left all now to follow him. It was only yesterday on the lake that he made known to them his wish. Oh, if I too might but receive so great a favor!"

“It will come to thee, I think, Philip. Thou knowest when he met thee first in the spring, before the marriage at Cana, that he bade thee follow him.”

“Yes, but that is long ago, and in all these months he hath had time to forget me. I fear I am not such a man as he would choose to be near him always, now that he hath so great a fame. Simon, whom he hath surnamed Peter, and the sons of Zebedee, are stronger men than I. Nevertheless, their hearts are not truer, and if he should be so gracious as to call me also to him, I would follow him as long as I live, and even unto death.”

CHAPTER IX

Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.—*Isaiah.*

IN the house of Simon Peter in Capernaum, on a certain day some weeks later, a great crowd was gathered so that there was no room to receive them, not so much as about the door, and they stood even out upon the street, pressing close together with eager faces. Within, in the colonnade surrounding the central court of the house, the Master stood and taught the people, and the grace of God was upon him.

It was an unusual company in Peter's house that day. Among the inhabitants of the town and of the other lakeside villages were mingled many strangers—scholars, Pharisees, and men of influence from all Galilee and even from Judea; while a group of distinguished doctors of the law who came from Jerusalem itself, bore witness to the fact that the fame of the Nazarene was spreading throughout the land and that the party in Jerusalem, whose power emanated from Annas, the high priest, himself, had thought it time to learn something concerning this strange rabbi.

If the Master understood that he was in effect

upon trial before the most powerful men of his nation, through their agents, nothing in his words or ways betrayed it. Coming in from an hour in the quiet of the country outside the busy town, where in solitude he had sought the strength of God, he appeared now before the waiting throng with a face glorified by his sense of his Father's presence, quiet and full of peace.

While he was yet speaking four men, Philip of Bethsaida, a grizzled slave, the Seba of former days, and two others, approached the house, carrying between them a litter on which lay a helpless paralytic.

It was Adriel.

They paused at the entrance to the house, but finding the assembled people standing even in the street, they perceived that it was useless to attempt to force their way into the court at that point. For a moment they stood, disappointed and uncertain what to do. Suddenly Philip, turning, led the little group, still carefully and tenderly bearing the sick man, back into the garden at the side of the house where the outer staircase led to the roof.

"What wilt thou do?" asked one of the men, perplexed as to his intent, and the sunken eyes of Adriel roved in troubled wonder about him and fastened upon Philip's face in piteous appeal.

"Where art thou taking me?" he asked feebly.

"Fear thou nothing," his friend made answer, strong and cheerful as always. "I am but taking thee to the Master; since we cannot find entrance to the house below, we will see if we may not find it above." In a moment more they had reached the housetop and gently laid the litter down, while Adriel, faint and dizzy from the unusual motion and overcome by the fatigue of his journey, for he had been brought in Philip's boat from Tiberias, lay with eyes closed and a pallor like death upon his face.

For a moment Philip feared that his bold undertaking was of doubtful wisdom, and with impetuous haste he proceeded with the help of the other three to remove the loose tiling above the court in the center of the roof, until a wide opening was made through which he could look down.

"Yes, there he is," he whispered to his helpers; "just below us there."

In the densely crowded court some men noticed the sudden light falling from above, as the tiling was removed, but, spellbound by the wonderful teaching, they heeded it not, and listened as before, eyes and thoughts riveted upon the Master.

Ropes having been provided, with swift dexterity Philip adjusted them around the litter which was then brought over to the opening just made in the roof, and cautiously and slowly they lowered it

into the midst of the company, until it rested upon the pavement in a little open space before the feet of Jesus.

Pausing in his words, the Master looked at Adriel as he lay, faint, trembling, with gaunt, sorrowful eyes raised in solemn appeal to his, and then looked up to the open roof where Philip and his helpers leaned, breathless and eager, peering down into the court to see what would follow. He saw their faith; he saw the sick man's deepest need. Fixing his large serious eyes upon Adriel's, he said :

"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

It was an utterance simple yet divine, transcending all that had gone before it, as it transcended the highest reach of the sufferer's hope. They had brought him to the great Healer because they knew the needs of his stricken body, but the awful desolation of his spirit they could not know. He had suffered them to bring him, but in a kind of hopeless submission, since for his burden of sin and remorse he looked for no release. And now this calm, majestic teacher, looking at him with an endless pity in his eyes, had searched the very darkest abyss of his suffering and had lifted him from it. Whether the release from his death-in-life of paralysis was to follow, he knew not nor cared at

this the supreme moment of his life. There were light and life and cleansing for his stained and guilty soul ; this sufficed.

But there were men there of another sort ; men who bore no keen consciousness of sin ; whose outward respectability was counted by themselves for righteousness. Among the delegation from Jerusalem there were whispered words and frowns of disapproval, and one, bolder than the rest, murmured with an air of great amazement :

“ Who is this that speaketh blasphemies ? Who can forgive sins but God alone ? ”

Turning toward the speaker, the Master asked quietly :

“ Why do ye think evil in your hearts ? Which is easier, for me to say unto this man,” and for an instant his eyes again rested upon Adriel with that unspeakable pity, “ to say unto this man, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to bid him arise and walk ? But that ye may know that I, the Son of man, have power on earth to forgive sins ”—he turned away from them and looking upon Adriel, said low, but in the tone of absolute, irresistible command of which Philip had spoken—“ I say unto thee, arise ! Take up thy couch and go thy way unto thine house.”

His power to heal the body attested his power to heal the soul, for lo. at his word, Adriel who had

lain powerless as if touched by death itself these many years, arose before them all, and took up with strong, steady hands, that whereon he lay.

Gladly would he have tarried to kneel at the Master's feet and pour out his adoring gratitude, but the command had been imperative: "Go thy way unto thine house."

It was the will of the great Healer that he should be alone for a while that so he might commune with his own heart and be still, and see the salvation of God.

Adriel turned. The company that had watched breathless and astonished thus far, wondered yet more when they saw his face. Something of the beauty of his youth had returned to the marred features; the eyes were clear and shining with joy, words of praise were upon the lips, and as he advanced through the crowd which fell back on either side before him, his steps were those of a strong, free man.

So great was the amazement and enthusiasm that the gathering was broken up, for all the people were glorifying God and saying one to another, in awed and astonished accents:

"We have seen wondrous works wrought by the Nazarene before, but we never saw it on this fashion!"

But the party of learned men from Jerusalem

stood coldly aloof, jealous of the power they could not deny.

Adriel, glad in the great, two-fold liberty where-with he had been made free, returned to the home in Tiberias.

CHAPTER X

God chose the weak things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are strong.—*St. Paul.*

“PHILIP, son of Enoch of Bethsaida, unto the most excellent and beloved Lazarus, the learned rabbi of Bethany, greeting :

“I that write this selfsame epistle unto thee have been chosen of him, the Nazarene of whom thou knowest, to be his disciple. Greatly do I marvel that unto me, who am simple and unlearned and slow of understanding, should this grace be given ; but it is even so. I am in his presence day after day ; where he goeth there I go, and where he tarrieth I remain. My joy is full.

“It is even the same with all of us, for he hath named among his followers twelve who are to abide with him continually. Thou canst think how all others desire such favor, and that we count ourselves the happiest of men. Here in Galilee men think and talk of nothing in these last days but of our Master and his mighty working ; and they follow him even from the Decapolis and the regions beyond Jordan. It is thought by us who know him best and behold his greatness closest,

that he is in very truth the One who was to come, even the Messiah. We are waiting, and believe that ere long all things shall be ready and he will place himself at the head of our nation. He speaketh daily of the kingdom which he hath come to establish.

“Thou wilt ask me who are of this company of twelve so greatly exalted, and thou wilt marvel that among us is no learned man, no rabbi, Pharisee, or ruler. In sooth it is a marvel unto all, and chiefly unto ourselves; for, save one, a man from Kerieth in Judea, all are Galileans, and the larger number, like him who now writeth unto thee, are fishermen from Gennesareth. And even now I bethink me to ask thee whether thou knowest aught of this one of our company, the man from Kerieth? His name is Judas; we call him Iscariot from the name of his town. Thou mayest have met the man in thy journeyings through the hill country, and I would gladly know what manner of man he seemeth unto thee. For me, albeit he is an earnest follower of the Master, full of zeal and untiring in his labor, something in him chills me; I like not the man’s eye.

“Foremost among us are Simon Peter, with his brother Andrew—men from Capernaum, of whom thou hast heard me speak—and the sons of Zebedee, James and John, whom the Master hath sur-

named the Sons of Thunder—strong and fearless men both ; but in John there is a spirit so pure that it is akin to that of Jesus himself ; and if thou sawest his eyes when they rest upon John thou wouldest know that he loveth him. John is the youngest among us.

“As we go from place to place I am happy in having oftenest for my companion my old and well-beloved friend Nathanael of Cana. He met and learned to know the Master first a full year ago, at the marriage feast in Cana, and he rejoiceth greatly in being chosen as a disciple. The others of our number are the brave and honest Simon, who was formerly of the Zealots in the revolution of Judas ; Thomas, a quiet man who sayeth little and considereth long ; Thaddeus and James, a son of Alpheus, and the newest comer, Matthew. I almost fear to tell thee that his occupation hath been that of a publican. Many judge the Master harshly for this reason ; but he heedeth it not, and hath even been to a great feast which Matthew made for him. We all were with him, and it hath caused much murmuring among the Pharisees, for they think it better beseemeth a prophet to fast and pray continually as did John, the son of Zacharias, and his disciples. Howbeit this is not the Master’s thought, for he saith, ‘Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?’

“I fear that there be many in Jerusalem who, like the Pharisees of whom I speak, perceive not the true greatness of the Nazarene and stumble, being offended that he holdeth not more strictly to the tradition of the elders. It hath come to our ears that, what time he spent in Jerusalem (none of us were with him then) at the feast just past, there was sharp opposition to him in certain quarters because he healed a man on the Sabbath day.

“If those who murmur against him could have been in Galilee and could have heard the wonderful teaching which he gave a week ago on the hill Hattin—it lieth on the western shores of our fair lake, above Magdala—they must surely have confessed that his thoughts were the thoughts of God. Ah, my Lazarus, it was the greatest teaching which ever fell from human lips, and the multitudes on the hillside and in the fields gave witness to its power. He searcheth the heart and judgeth according to the secret thoughts, not as do the Pharisees and rabbis, by washings and fastings, and such matters. Thus, he saith, for a man to be angry with his brother without a cause is akin to murder; that injuries must be forgiven unto the uttermost; that fasting and praying must be in secret; and that a man shall not resist or avenge his injuries; and many other doctrines which we have not heard before.

“ A strange thing hath happened or which I must briefly tell thee, and then end this long epistle. A rich Pharisee, named Simon, desired the Master that he would dine with him. Now this he did, we believe, not because he loved and understood the Lord, but because he wished to watch him and lie in wait for somewhat of which to accuse him. So we judge in part, because he treated him with strange coldness when he entered the house, weary and dusty from long journeying and the pressing of the multitude upon him, giving him no water for his feet nor oil for his anointing. The Master is ever patient, and beareth all things, but I was near him, and I knew that the scant courtesy grieved his spirit. Howbeit he said nothing.

“ Now while we sat at meat there came into the room a woman, a sinner, who had seen the Master and had heard his words, and longed for his gracious uplifting. The same woman stood at his feet and wept sore, thinking of her sinful life, until her tears flowing, bathed the Master's feet, and she presently dried them with her hair (it is long and exceeding beautiful), and then anointed them with an ointment which she had with her.

“ Simon, perceiving that Jesus did not rebuke the woman nor send her away, looked on, severe and displeased. The Master knew what was in his heart and spoke unto him concerning the forgive-

ness of two debtors, one for a great sum and one for a small. Then he turned and looked upon the weeping woman and bade Simon note that, whereas when he entered the house Simon had given him no water, no kiss, and no anointing, she, sinful and erring though she was, had not ceased to kiss his feet and to wash them with her tears. Then he spake these words, which no one who heard can ever forget, and his voice had a strange, sorrowful vibration as he spake :

“‘I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.’

“Thinkest thou that she can ever cease to love him who thus spake unto her? Nay, with all her soul, which his love and his pity have made clean, she adoreth him. She hath large substance, and out of it it is her chief joy to minister to the Master ; so likewise is it with Joanna, the noble matron of Tiberias.

“He who beareth this epistle bids me say this :

“*‘He saith, the great teacher: Love your enemies; do good to them which hate you; bless them that curse you; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.’*

“Think of this, Lazarus, when thou seest the man. He hath suffered grievous things, and like this woman being greatly forgiven, greatly loveth. And so, farewell.”

CHAPTER XI

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.—*Isaiah.*

NEAR the close of day, Lazarus, the son of Ithamar, sat within his house, studying by the fast-waning light. At his side, bending over a low table, was Mary, copying from an outspread scroll. No word was spoken between them, but the silence was rich with love and peace, and the shadow of sadness on the faces of the brother and sister had yielded before a new and living hope.

Presently Mary paused in her writing, and holding out the parchment toward Lazarus, pointed, without speaking, to the following words :

“ Because he poured out his soul unto death.”

Having read them Lazarus looked into her questioning face, with a troubled expression on his own.

“ There is more than this mention made, little sister, of sorrow and death to the Hope of Israel ; but it is a hard saying.”

Even as he spoke, a servant entered the quiet room and announced to Lazarus that a messenger from Galilee was without, bearing a letter which he asked leave to deliver into his own hand.

“Bid the man enter,” said Lazarus, receiving the announcement with marked interest.

“Doubtless there cometh fresh tidings from the Master,” he remarked to Mary, and they both were glad at the thought. In those early days of his ministry in Judea, Jesus had become a beloved guest in the household at Bethany into which he had brought great comfort and a new hope.

Immediately the messenger appeared, following the servant: a man of slender but well-knit frame, wearing a coarse brown abba, and having his face shaded by its hood. Beneath the overhanging edge, however, a pair of large, luminous eyes looked forth, whose strange anxiety of expression did not escape Mary’s notice as he stood before her brother. She wondered too, that the hand with which he gave the folded letter to Lazarus trembled, and supposing the man to be exhausted with his long journey, she rose, with the sweet and gracious instinct born in her, and bidding him be seated, directed the servant to place bread and meat before him.

The stranger accepted the place on the couch, but the food stood at his side untasted. “Not yet,” he said with a gesture of profound reverence. From her place Mary noted that the man’s eyes were fixed upon her brother’s face as he read the epistle of Philip, with an eagerness which she could

not understand. Once or twice she looked up at Lazarus. His face was gravely glad, and touched by intense interest in what he read ; further there was nothing noteworthy. But the pilgrim from Galilee, throwing back the concealing hood, and disclosing a head and face singularly noble, still watched the face of the son of Ithamar as if his life depended on its varying expression.

Mary was startled at the beauty of the stranger's face as well as at its extreme pallor and the intensity of its expression. As she watched the man, she said to herself, that in spite of his coarse raiment and humble seeming, his face was that of a prince, not that of a peasant, with its finely chiseled features. Why should such a man come to them in such a disguise, and with that imploring look in his eyes ? Her heart was strangely moved toward him.

And now, having nearly reached the end of the sheet, Lazarus suddenly sat erect in his place, and casting a keen and piercing glance at the stranger opposite, before which he trembled yet did not falter, he read again, and then rose to his feet, and read aloud, with measured emphasis :

“ He who beareth this epistle unto thee bids me say : *He saith, the great teacher : Love your enemies ; do good to them which hate you ; bless them that curse you ; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.*

“Think of this, Lazarus, when thou seest the man. He hath suffered grievous things, and like this woman, being greatly forgiven, greatly loveth.”

As he read the last words, the letter fell from the hand of Lazarus, and he confronted the messenger with a face as white as his own.

The man arose and took a step toward the rabbi with a hand outstretched as if beseeching. Mary looked at the two with large, wondering eyes and bewildered amazement.

“*Art thou Adriel?*” The voice of Lazarus was stern as he asked this question, and his face seemed to have grown old and sorrow-worn in a few moments of time, as that dark chapter of horror and anguish came before his mind, in which his foster-brother had played the traitor’s part.

“I am Adriel,” the other said low and sadly, his head drooping upon his breast, his hand fallen at his side, an embodiment of the humility and penitence which dare not so much as crave forgiveness. Nevertheless there was nothing abject or inviting contempt in that figure; even in the man’s humiliation, there was manhood and dignity.

“*Adriel!*”

Mary spoke the name with a piercing cry and covered her face with her hands with a burst of passionate tears.

“She is thinking,” said Lazarus slowly, as if

musing, "that but for thee our father's life had been spared and our mother's heart had not been broken."

"It is true;" the lips of Adriel shaped the words but no sound came from them.

"I am thinking that thou hast the blood of the heroes of Israel in thy veins, but thou hast been recreant to thy nation and a flatterer of her foes. Thou hast blasted every hope which was set on thee." All this was spoken gravely, without passion, but as if the speaker were recalling these facts for his own sake. To this also, Adriel replied:

"It is true; and there have been yet deeper stains than thou knowest."

"I had supposed that thou wast dead," Lazarus said after a pause, during which he had scanned the features of his early friend narrowly.

"I have wished to be, unto the son of Ithamar. And I have been—doubly dead, the body bound with chains as of death, the spirit buried beneath a mountain weight of sin and remorse." For a moment Adriel's voice failed him, and agony was visible in his face. Then he rallied himself and spoke:

"But Lazarus, one hath called me from the death-in-life in which I lay. Men brought me unto the Nazarene, of whom thou knowest. He

saw all and forgave all, and hath lifted me from the horrible pit and given me a new life to live."

"When sawest thou Jesus of Nazareth?" Lazarus asked.

Mary had lifted her head at the mention of the Master and sat looking in wonder at Adriel.

He had raised his eyes from the ground, the deathlike pallor had left his face, and they both marveled at the spiritual light which now shone from it.

"It was but a week ago," he made answer; "I was carried into his presence as one dead; as one who tasted the bitterness of death each day anew. He looked upon me; would you know what he said? '*Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven!*' Afterward he said: '*Arise, and take up thy bed and go unto thy house.*' And immediately I was made whole."

"Mary," said Lazarus gently, "we speak with one whom our Lord Christ hath lifted up; shall we cast him down?"

For the first time since she was a child the eyes of Adriel rested fully upon the daughter of Ithamar, and beheld her gracious beauty. There were tears in her eyes even now, but they were not the bitter tears of passion which she had shed at first. With pity and forgiveness, such as only those could know who had learned them of the

Nazarene, she stretched out both hands, exclaiming:

“Let it be according to the Master’s word. We bless thee; we forgive thee; we love thee—for his sake!”

Adriel fell upon his knees at Mary’s feet and pressed the hem of her robe to his lips. It was the hand of Lazarus which lifted him up and his voice which said:

“No longer shalt thou be unto us as an enemy, but as a brother beloved. He whom the Christ hath forgiven hath full forgiveness. Lift up thy head, my Adriel, and begin with good cheer the new life unto which the Master hath called thee.”

And so it was that Martha coming in was told all that had come to pass, and when she knew it, she also received Adriel with full forgiveness in the name of the Master. Then they all entreated him that he would abide in their house as their brother, but to this Adriel said:

“Most gladly would I tarry with you, my noblest friends, unworthy as I am of your loving favor, but I cannot say where I may abide. I go where He sendeth me who hath called me unto life; for the life which I now live is his gift, and it must be spent in his service.”

And the children of Ithamar glorified God in the word which was spoken unto them by Adriel.

CHAPTER XII

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.—Isaiah.

AT the close of a Sabbath Day in Capernaum the Master sat in the house of Peter, and in the court around him were twelve men, the little band of his chosen friends. A peculiar silence pervaded the house; none sought admission to the Master on this night, and in place of the enthusiastic crowds which had been wont to surround him there, men passed the house with averted faces, or in cold and gloomy indifference.

Even upon the circle of the Twelve something of discontent rested. In other times they regarded an hour alone with the Master as an especial privilege; but this night, in the house of late so visited by eager seekers that they had not time so much as to eat, there was a sense of loneliness and depression. They spoke little among themselves; one of the number, it was Iscariot, withdrawn from the others, sat in deep thought, and glanced ever and anon from under his knitted brows at the face of his young Master, with a strange and sinister expression. That face was not less calm, less majestic in its repose than it had ever been, but

there was a solemn sadness on it now which the Twelve had never seen before.

At length the silence was broken; it was the Master who spoke.

“Will ye also go away?” he asked, looking about upon the Twelve.

There was a moment of painful silence. The expressions upon the different faces made a strange study; a certain hard defiance on that of Iscariot, on that of Thomas a troubled perplexity, on John’s a smile of endless tenderness.

But it was left to Simon Peter to speak. His strong energetic nature had given him a kind of leadership among these men. With unshaken resolution and yet with a look not all untroubled he made answer :

“Lord, to whom shall we go, but unto thee? thou hast the words of eternal life.”

There was a pause in which the dispirited faces brightened, for the sturdy affectionate loyalty of Peter brought better cheer. Again he spoke :

“And, furthermore, how should we leave thee, seeing that we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Holy One of God?”

The Master looked about upon them.

“I have myself chosen you twelve men,” he said, after a little, almost as if speaking to himself; “and yet among you even, is one that is of the devil.”

In silence and dismay they looked into one another's faces, but the gloom upon the brow of Iscariot deepened.

The tide of public favor toward Jesus had reached its height and was ebbing fast. The fickle multitude had turned away from him; even the Twelve were disappointed, although still loyal. It had been but a step from enthusiastic devotion to desertion and avoidance. How had it come to pass?

From the day when, in the house of Simon Peter, the paralytic Adriel was healed in presence of the delegation from Jerusalem, an opposition to the Master had made itself sharply felt from that source. Go where he might, on whatever errand of love or beneficence, he was dogged and shadowed by the emissaries of the chief priests and rulers of Jerusalem. With sneering comments they sought to belittle his words and to lessen the effect of his mighty works upon the common people, who ever heard him gladly.

Whenever an occasion presented itself these carping critics joined issue with Jesus on some trivial question of external observance, chiefly with regard to the Sabbath, seeking to throw him into disrepute as a religious teacher.

For the fact was simply this: the nation, whether

Sadducee, Herodian, ecclesiastic, or Pharisee, men who cringed to Rome or those who plotted for freedom and independence, the worldly minded or the bigoted religionists, all alike, save the lower classes of society, having weighed the claims of the Nazarene to the Messiahship, had scornfully rejected him.

This carpenter's son of Nazareth, low-born and untaught in the schools, the king of Israel? This heretical young rabbi, who ate with publicans and sinners, and with unwashed hands, who broke the Sabbath and the traditions of the elders, and spoke slightly of the righteousness of the Pharisees, this man to be the head of the chosen people? The idea was inconceivable. He was an offense to them, the greater as his influence grew beyond their control. Hence secretly and openly they worked against him, sowing seeds of disaffection and unbelief everywhere.

At this crisis came the death in prison of John the Baptist, a favor granted by Antipas at the close of a debauch to the daughter of Herodias, who had pleased him by a voluptuous dance. This circumstance chilled the devotion of the Galileans; John had been the chief witness to the Master at the beginning; why then did he leave him to pine all those months in prison, and then to lose his life at the edge of the sword?

But once more the popular enthusiasm flamed high, for on a day just after the death of John, by a power which all men said must be divine, the Master had fed a company of five thousand men in the fields near Bethsaida-Julias from a handful of food. The multitude, to whom an act like this appealed supremely, were wild with joy. This man must after all be the Messiah, and the time for his manifestation was come. The kingdom of God was at hand! He should gather an army and all men would flock to his standard. Why not?—a man who could give them food without their money or labor? By force they would have taken him and made him king. A revolution like that under Judas the Zealot was in their thought, only this man would be victorious where Judas had failed.

Sick at heart at the coarse misconception of his character and mission, the Lord withdrew and hid himself from the populace, going into a mountain alone, on the lonely eastern shore of the sea of Galilee, where the miracle of the feeding had taken place. The ardor of the people thus baffled, at once cooled, and when he appeared among them again at Capernaum they were ready to challenge him for a sign of his Messiahship.

It was the Sabbath, and the Master went, as was his wont, to the synagogue, the beautiful white marble hall which had been built for the towns-

people by the centurion whose servant he had healed of a grievous illness. It was a day of crisis for him and yet more for the people, and the sure foreboding of what must come showed itself in the Master's face.

His discourse that morning was widely different from the sermon on Hattin Hill. That was spoken under the influence of the blue sky, the sunshine, the flowers of the field; the simple needs, common desires, and familiar sins of the people were his theme. This day he sought to lead them up to higher truths, and to the conception of himself as the eternal food for their souls, the Bread of life. They could not comprehend him. "What!" they cried. "Will this man give us his flesh to eat?" grossly misinterpreting his words, missing their divine beauty, and turning away repelled.

"Is not this after all, Jesus," they began now to murmur among themselves, "the son of Joseph of Nazareth, the carpenter? We know his father and his mother. How is it then that he saith, 'I came down from heaven'?"

And from this time his influence among the people at large in Galilee was gone; and of those who had been his devoted disciples the greater part fell away, so that on that Sabbath night he was forsaken by all but the Twelve, and sat with them beneath a deepening shadow.

The day of visitation for Galilee was over. He had come unto his own, and his own had received him not. Although he had done among them many mighty works, yet the people at large had already ceased to regard him. He had healed their sick, had cleansed their lepers, given sight and hearing to the blind and deaf, cast out spirits of evil, had even raised their dead to life, and had himself borne all their sorrows with love and patience which never tired. Nevertheless, when they found that it was not in his purpose to set up a standard for their freedom as a nation, they hid, as it were, their faces from him ; he was despised and they esteemed him not.

It was time to go. The forces against him had been set in motion too soon, and were working too fast ; Sadducees as well as Pharisees were combining now with the Herodians to end his influence with the people at any cost ; Herod Antipas too had become aroused to the fact that a mighty man of God was rallying the multitudes around him, and he had declared in guilty terror, "It is John the Baptist, whom I beheaded, who hath risen from the dead." Furthermore, he had said that he wished to see the Nazarene—ominous wish from a Herod.

Gathering the narrowed circle of his followers about him, even the Twelve, the Master withdrew from the dear home places, from the lake and the

hills and fair plains of Galilee, and sought remote and alien regions, even the Mediterranean coasts near Tyre and Sidon, afterward journeying eastward into the Decapolis. The power of God was upon him in full measure, and among the Gentiles, as among his own chosen people, he wrought miracles of healing. His heart always moved with tender compassion at the sight of suffering. But the Twelve, who watched him anxiously, saw in him a marked change. He had grown graver and sadder, more careworn, more given to silent thought; and when he spoke with them it was of truths profounder than in the happy, earlier time, and all that he said was tinged with the shadow of a great, approaching change.

"The things concerning me have an end." This was the seal with which all his acts and words were now marked; but those who loved him and whom he longed to take with him into the deepening life which he now lived, understood him not, and clung to their narrow hopes of earthly triumph.

Patiently he sought to fit to their minds his teaching of the power of self-abasement, the divine joy of losing one's own life for the life of all. The minds of the twelve men whom he had chosen for his friends, all untrained, or trained only in the simplest processes of thought and perception, and rising in spiritual insight little above their fel-

lows, grasped but the crudest and most obvious conclusions. They saw, to their keen disappointment and humiliation, that their Master was not attaining to the popular leadership which they had expected, but with a kind of rude fidelity which endeared them to him, while it pierced his heart by what it lacked, they still followed him.

And so the quiet king went on his way, alone in spirit save for the high converse with the Father and with the strong ministers of heavenly upholding whom the Father sent.

BOOK III

THE LIFE OF MEN

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
And home to Mary's house return'd,
Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
To hear her weeping by his grave?

“Where wert thou, brother, those four days?”
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,
The streets were fill'd with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crown'd
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
He told it not; or something seal'd
The lips of that Evangelist.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits;
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.

—*Tennyson.*

CHAPTER I

I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.—*Revelation.*

IT was October, and the third day of the feast of Tabernacles.

The city of Jerusalem was transformed into a leafy wilderness, for on the housetops, in the courts, even in the outer court of the temple, and on many of the chief streets, bowers or tents had been fashioned of green branches, wherein for seven days the people dwelt, in memorial of the time when their fathers had been pilgrims in a strange land and sojourners in tabernacles.

The multitude of sacrifices throughout this week was well-nigh innumerable; the great altar of burnt-offering in the temple was decked with willow garlands, and twenty-one times each day did the silver trumpets sound a pealing blast; and at night the lamps of the temple flooded the city with radiance; for this was the great autumn festival, the harvest feast, the most joyous and unconstrained of the Jewish year.

It was morning, and the early sacrifice with its impressive oblation of water from the pool of Si-

loam, was just at an end. The chanted psalms of the priestly choir had died away, and the worshippers were surging in cheerful throngs through the gates and courts of the temple. Near the gate Nicanor, stood a little group of men talking eagerly but in low voices.

“Thinkest thou that he will come up unto the feast, good friend? Thou seemest to have some closer knowledge of the man than have we.”

It was a young ruler who spoke, and the man to whom he addressed the question was Adriel, who despite the coarseness of his garb seemed to be the center of interest, both from the boldness of his speech and the peculiarly winning power of his face and manner. The councillor Nicodemus, grown old and gray, stood with him.

“I cannot say,” Adriel returned answer. “His brethren are here from Galilee and they say that he cometh not unto the feast. Howbeit they may not know certainly, for they are not in his inner counsels; they comprehend him not.”

“What sayest thou of him,” continued the young ruler, “since thou seemest better to comprehend him? Is he a good man, or, as many say, a mere deceiver of the people?”

“Wouldst thou know indeed what I say of him?” asked Adriel, flashing a glance of searching inquiry into the other’s face.

“Have a care, my Adriel; speak more softly! It is not safe to say all that we may think at all times,” said Nicodemus, and he made as if he would constrain him to silence with eye and hand.

Adriel looked into the face of his fatherly friend with a smile in which reverence mingled strangely with surprise.

“I will seek to speak more gently, my father,” he replied; “but I must speak, since this worthy man hath asked me.”

Others had joined the group now, attracted by the eager tones of Adriel; and at a short distance apart, but plainly interested in what was said, there stood, leaning upon a staff, a bent and withered old man with yellow, sunken face, prominent teeth, and restless, crafty eyes. This man, arrayed in spotless linen of the finest texture, and wearing the distinguishing cup-shaped headgear, was no other than Annas, who still divided the honors and spoils of the high-priesthood with his son-in-law Caiaphas.

Nicodemus watched the aged priest uneasily, but Adriel gave no heed to him, as he declared in a lower tone but with strong emphasis:

“I say of Jesus of Nazareth that he is the Messiah, the Holy One of God.”

“How sayest thou so, since it is written of Messiah that he shall come of the house and lineage of

David? This man is but a Nazarene carpenter's son," replied the ruler.

"Thou sayest truly, but none the less his family are of the line of David; he is of the blood royal after the flesh, my friend, as well as a prince of God in spirit."

Something of incredulity mingled with a livelier interest, was expressed in the ruler's countenance.

"Very well; so be it. The same can be said of many a man of humble rank to-day; there is more than one prince in peasant's garments among us," and he glanced significantly at Adriel. "But even then the thing falls to the ground. It is foretold of him who shall redeem Israel, that he shall be born in Bethlehem, the city of David, and this man is a Galilean, as all men know, born in Nazareth."

"Thou art mistaken, friend," Adriel made reply steadily. "The Nazarene, as men call him, was born as it hath been written of him, in David's city, even in Bethlehem Judah."

The old high priest had drawn gradually nearer, and now stood behind Adriel, sidewise, with his head bent in his direction. Nicodemus pulled his younger friend by the mantle, and sought to lead him away; but Adriel stood his ground, ignoring the presence of Annas, if indeed he was aware of it.

As Adriel made the last statement the young ruler stared at him in undisguised amazement.

“How can this be?” he asked.

“Tell him, my father,” said Adriel, touching the shoulder of Nicodemus; “thou knowest of these things as we younger men cannot. Thou wast here in Jerusalem when his birth was made known.”

Thus called upon Nicodemus did not hesitate, although silence would better have suited him.

“It was thirty years back,” he began, “in the last year, if I mistake not, of Herod’s reign, that certain strangers from the far East came hither, guided, so they said, by some newly discovered star, asking where he was born that should be king of the Jews. All the city was stirred concerning the matter, and the king himself had the men brought before him. The priests and scribes declared that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, and thither went the strangers still guided by the star, and there they found, by the sign given them, a babe, the son of a young wife named Mary, who had come from Nazareth with her husband, Joseph, on account of the tax which took place under Cyrenius, and she being great with child, had been delivered in the inn.”

“And dost thou mean that Jesus the Nazarene is that same child?” asked the young ruler, greatly surprised.

"I cannot say, I cannot say," Nicodemus answered hurriedly. "It may be so, but I know not." Aside he said to Adriel, "It were better for his own sake that we say no more. Seest thou not who standeth near thee?"

At this moment all were startled by a harsh but trembling voice from behind Adriel, which called :

"It is false, it is all false! Ye are all befooled. I said in the beginning that the man was an impostor, and it is proven now, mark ye ; it is proven."

It was Annas who spoke, turning fully toward the others and looking out at them under his shaggy eyebrows with a triumphant leer. They all looked at him in silence, respecting his great age and his exalted place.

"Listen to me," he said, with a significant gesture of his skinny forefinger. "That child, whom the strangers from the East sought and found, perished with all the other infants born in that year, *by the will of Herod*. Not one was saved, not one. The Nazarene pretender hath missed his reckoning ; some of us remember more than he thinketh."

Unwilling to become entangled with Annas in anything like controversy, Nicodemus quietly withdrew, and the young ruler followed him to ask further questions concerning his knowledge of Jesus. The other men also scattered, for the ex-high priest

was both feared and hated, and Adriel was left alone with him. Looking down upon the ignoble face and figure before him, Adriel said quietly :

“ ‘ By the will of Herod, ’ thou sayest, the innocents of Bethlehem perished. Yea, verily. But by the will of God one was saved—the son of Mary.”

For answer, Annas looked at him in contemptuous indifference from head to foot, and then said :

“ If thou art wise, young man, thou wilt take heed to thyself and have done with repeating these flimsy fables in the public ear. We know all about this man, and need not come to thee for tidings. Who art thou, forsooth, with thy vagabond dress and thy over-ready tongue ? ”

“ Adriel, the son of Chilion, the exile ; the foster child of Ithamar of Jerusalem,” was the brief answer, and Adriel turned on his heel and left Annas, who trembled on his staff with surprise and agitation.

Leaving the temple, Adriel encountered Lazarus in the porch, who exclaimed with joyful look :

“ Hast thou seen him ? ”

“ Nay,” replied Adriel, “ is he here ? They said he would not come.”

“ He hath come ; I saw him myself but an hour ago.”

“ Is he as ever ? ”

“ Nay, I find him greatly changed. He is older

and hath a sadder countenance, but one not less divine. My heart yearneth to bring him joy and comfort. Goest thou now even unto Bethany, my brother? If so, wilt thou take this packet unto my sisters?" and with this the noble rabbi went his way.

At noon that day Adriel stood with Mary within the court of the home in Bethany, which was filled with fragrant bowers of palm and olive boughs. Against the luxuriant background the slender, white-robed shape of the lovely lady stood fair as marble.

With eager voice she spoke to Adriel :

"Tell me," she begged him, "more of the Master. Hath my brother seen him? Thinkest thou, Adriel, that he hath friends in Jerusalem with whom he will lodge during the feast? Oh, if he would but come and abide with us!"

Adriel's face kindled with eagerness.

"Wilt thou that I return to the temple and bid him come hither?" he asked quickly.

"Most gladly would I have thee, but that I fear it is asking of him too great a favor," and Mary watched Adriel's face with sensitive anxiety.

"Nay, I am sure it is not, and I will tell thee why. In the city I met our good friend Philip of Bethsaida, and he told me much of these last months since I left Galilee. It seemeth incredible,

but he saith that the people have turned away of late from the Master and he can walk no more in Galilee. My heart is sore to think of him as wandering in strange parts, almost without friends or home, for I know that he careth like ourselves, Mary, for human love and kindness."

Mary's sweet eyes filled with tears.

"Philip told me of one man, who met Jesus in the way and saith unto him, 'Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.' Nay, Mary, thou wilt weep when I tell thee his answer. 'Foxes have holes,' he said, 'and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head'! Thinkest thou not now that he would gladly find a home in such a house as this, and among pure and noble spirits like yours who love and know him truly?"

"Then hasten, Adriel, and make known to him our wish—for well I know it to be that of my brother and sister—that he shall now and ever, when he will, tarry in our house."

Adriel hastened back to the city to find the Christ.

It was nightfall when he returned and the Master was with him; but Lazarus remained in Jerusalem on account of the observance of the feast. It was in one of the leafy tents erected in the wide court that the Lord sat while the evening meal was

being prepared. Joyfully had the hospitable matron, Martha, welcomed Jesus ; but after a little space she left him, full of busy care and eager desire to provide a supper worthy of her house and of her noble guest.

All were gone now from the rustic tent but the Master and Mary. Timidly she took a place at his feet, and looked up with adoring love into his face. It was divinely calm, she thought, as when he had been in Bethany before, but oh, so sadly worn with care and sorrow now, and with a strange, pathetic patience in the eyes.

It had been a day of weary conflict. He had taught in the temple, and the Pharisees, glad to have him again within their reach, had opposed and set him at naught after their old fashion. Nevertheless, many of the people were deeply impressed, and when the fact that many were saying "Is not this the Christ?" came to the chief priests, they were alarmed, and some among them proposed his arrest.

The quiet and peace of the home at Bethany were passing sweet to the Master after the hostile influences which had surrounded him all day, and even sweeter was the childlike, confiding love in the eyes of Mary. In quiet wise he talked with her, unfolding thoughts, lofty and divine, upon the life to come, the future, concerning which her spirit had



ECSTASY.

Page 220.

1917
No. 100
100

1918
No. 100
100

1919
No. 100
100

1920
No. 100
100

1921
No. 100
100



BETHANY.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

suffered such troubled questioning. As they talked thus, all common cares forgotten by them both, Martha appeared in the doorway of the booth. Her face was flushed and her bright, dark eyes had a light in them which showed that her quick temper was somewhat stirred.

“Lord, dost thou not care,” she cried, half playful but half vexed, “that my sister leaveth me to serve alone? Wilt thou not speak unto her that she help me?”

Disturbed and sorry, Mary sprang to her feet, but the Master, putting forth his hand as if to check them both said, fondly chiding :

“Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. Nevertheless, the better part is the one that Mary hath chosen ; and it shall not be taken away from her.”

Into the very depths of her heart Mary received the grave, kind smile with which he added these words, and all her life she treasured it ; while Martha, honest and generous of nature, perceived the mistake she had made in placing the Master's service before the Master himself, and perceiving, came nearer to his heart.

On the last, the great day of the feast, the Master went as on other days to the city, and taught in one of the outer courts of the temple. During the last night the plans of the council concerning

him had been perfected, and while he was speaking, a large company being gathered around him, the officers of the temple came near to take him into arrest. They stopped for a moment to listen, having a desire to know what manner of teaching it might be which awakened so much indignation among the priests and Pharisees. With growing wonder they listened to the words which he spoke, and caught his look of kingly courage and power, as he stood fearless before his enemies, unguarded and without means of escape.

In awe they turned and looked at one another, and then with one consent left the spot and returned through the gate Nicanor to the hall of Polished Stones, where the council sat in waiting. With grim, expectant eagerness they were received, but a moment showed the council that they came without their prisoner.

“Why have ye not brought him?” cried Annas, angry and disappointed.

“Never man spake like this man,” the officers answered in dogged simplicity, not flinching even before the sneers of the council, for certain Pharisees asked, taunting them :

“Are ye also deceived? Take notice that this Nazarene hath no followers among the rulers or Pharisees ; these ignorant country folk that believe on him are cursed, knowing not the law.”

Throughout this scene, the councillor Nicodemus had been a silent listener.

An echo seemed to sound in his ears of a voice strangely sweet, speaking in the darkness of a soft spring night, in a silent garden, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Could he forget that voice, and the thrilling perception which had come to him under its influence? Could he deny the Nazarene?

Again and again he had essayed to speak, but with each attempt his courage failed him; the life-long habit of caution, his inborn hesitancy, above all, his fear of the criticism of his fellow Sanhedrists, restrained him. At this point, however, he felt that he could keep silence no longer.

"Doth our law judge a man," he asked in his deliberate manner, but with a touch of irony, "before it hear him, and know what he doeth?"

Instantly the shafts of malicious cavil were directed to him.

"Art thou also of Galilee?" sneered Annas in rising irritation. "Search then, and thou wilt find that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

With this the council broke up and every man returned to his own house to think over the matter.

It was evident to them all that the time was not yet ripe to rid themselves of the Nazarene; not yet, but it would be soon.

CHAPTER II

A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench : he shall bring forth judgment in truth.—*Isaiah.*

AS in the preceding summer, the Christ had sojourned in the Gentile regions of the north when he could no longer live in Galilee, so through the winter and early spring of this closing year, was he constrained to continue his retreat in Perea, east of the Jordan, to avoid the persecution which was concentrated upon him in Jerusalem.

It was late in the winter, when on a certain day, he was teaching a little company who had sought him out in the village where he was tarrying a few days, being now again a homeless wayfarer. But the interest in his words spread quickly, and men and women of the lower orders gathered, listening with intense eagerness to his strange, new teaching. But even a little half-Gentile town like this had its synagogue and its sprinkling of narrow, self-important Pharisees, and some of these who were near the Master looked on, shocked and indignant, saying among themselves :

“This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.”

It was hard to bear this continual shallow taunt, but the Lord was very patient and never did he grow hopeless of making men at last see what the grace and love of his Father really were. So now he began to speak in a parable unto them, for much of his noblest teaching was given in this way.

“What man of you,” he asked, looking about him with winning kindness, “having an hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety-and nine and go after that which is lost until he find it?”

The simple-hearted village folk nodded cordially in assent, but the Pharisees held themselves stiff and unresponsive, as was ever their wont. The Master went on :

“And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.”

Then with his eyes darkening with earnest longing to make them understand, Jesus showed them what the illustration meant.

“I say unto you,” he proceeded, “that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who never went astray.”

He saw that some among them were honestly striving to understand his meaning and in order to make it clearer he went on and told story after story, each more tender, more exquisite in its suggestiveness and warmer in its human sympathy than the last.

While he was yet speaking he noticed a man coming down the village street with weary but hasty steps, travel-worn, and plainly a pilgrim from beyond the Jordan. Reaching the outskirts of the little crowd, this man stopped irresolutely, and his eyes were fixed upon the Master's face with peculiar anxiety as if they pleaded with him for recognition.

The man was Adriel.

The Master finished what he was saying, and even as he was in the act of dismissing the people he made a sign to Adriel that he should wait and speak with him. But he needed no invitation. It was for this that he had come with flying feet all the distance from Jerusalem, and he hastened to place in the hands of Jesus a tablet on which Martha of Bethany had written these words :

“Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.”

A shade of trouble passed over the Master's face as he read the message, but it was only for a moment and then with a look of cordial cheer he said to Adriel :

“This sickness is not unto death. It is for the glory of God. The Son of God shall be glorified by it.”

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Adriel knowing this was filled with comfort at his words.

“Shall I then take this word to the sisters from thee, Lord?” he asked, and receiving the assent of the Master, he hastened to prepare for his two days’ journey back to Bethany, for it was he who in his loving gratitude and faithfulness could best minister unto the needs of Lazarus.

It was the third day afterward and they were abiding still in that same village when Jesus surprised them all by saying :

“Let us go into Judea again.”

“Master!” the disciples protested, “the Jews sought to stone thee the last time thou wast in Jerusalem, only a few weeks ago, and goest thou thither again?”

Jesus looked at them thoughtfully for a moment and then said :

“Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.”

“But, Lord, if he is fallen asleep he shall do well,” they remonstrated; for they all rested in the belief that the Master’s healing power had been already mysteriously exerted for their friend.

Then said Jesus plainly unto them, "Lazarus is dead."

The disciples looked at him amazed and sorrow-stricken. Why should this have been suffered? Their thoughts flew to the beautiful home in Bethany and to Martha and Mary, orphaned, comfortless, and alone in the world, for they had clung to this brother as their strength and stay, and they were exceeding sorrowful.

Again the Master spoke:

"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there," he said, "to the intent ye may believe. But now let us go unto him."

The Twelve glanced one at the other and each could read his own thought in the faces of the rest. If Lazarus was beyond help why should their beloved Lord venture again among the hostile spirits of Judea now openly arrayed against him? They durst not say this plainly, but Thomas, slow to reach a decision, but firm when he had once reached it, gave voice to the feeling of them all in the words:

"Then let us also go, that we may die with him."

At the same hour they made ready and departed from the Perea village and started on the long and weary way toward Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III

He hath swallowed up death for ever ; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.—*Isaiah*.

IN the afternoon of the Thursday following the appearance of Adriel in the distant Perea village, when the shadows were growing long on the slopes of Olivet, the Master with the twelve disciples approached Bethany by the road from the east.

As they entered the long and silent street—for a hush seemed to pervade all the town—they met certain neighbors of the family coming away from the house of Lazarus with sad and tearful faces. It was sincere, not professional mourning with these people, for Lazarus, for his blameless life and noble nature, had been warmly beloved by high and low.

One of the disciples stopped a little company of these sorrowing friends and asked a question as one who dreaded the reply.

“Yea, verily, he hath lain now already these four days in the house of silence,” one answered.

Another of the company, who had recognized in the group of dusty Galilean pilgrims the pure face

of the Nazarene, which once seen could never be forgotten, hastened back to the house to tell Martha that "Jesus was coming." Well he knew that nothing could comfort her broken heart as could his presence.

When the word was brought to Martha that the Master was even now at the entrance to the village, she rose from the place where she had been weeping with her sister and many of their friends, who sat beside them vainly attempting to soothe their grief, and with something of the impulsive energy so characteristic of her hastened forth to meet him. But Mary did not follow her. Her delicate frame was spent with the passion of her sorrow, and not even to see Him whom she so loved and longed for, could she rouse from the exhaustion of her despair, for the anguish of her grief for Lazarus was little less than this. The old hopeless doubts, for a time dispelled by the presence of Jesus, had overwhelmed her spirit during these last days; death and decay, heart-break and separation and the eternal silence of the grave, had again become the dominant chords in her sad soul.

But Martha hastened to the Master, and when, just beyond the town, she found him alone—for the disciples had gone on toward the house of mourning—she cried, with streaming eyes ·

“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died! Even now, although it is too late to save him from death, I know that God heareth thy prayer, and will give thee whatsoever thou wilt ask for us.”

Vaguely, hardly knowing what she said, she spoke these words, only conscious of the infinite uplifting and hope that came to her as she looked once more into his eyes.

“Thy brother shall rise again.”

Brief and strong were the Master's words, as of one who trusts himself to say little because his thought is over-great.

“I know that he shall rise again,” said Martha, her heart struggling to satisfy itself with what seemed but cold and distant comfort, “in the resurrection, at the last day.”

Jesus said unto her :

“I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live”—slowly, solemnly the august words were spoken ; firmly each one was set, as if it had been a rock to which her soul might cling in the shock of the tempest—“and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this ?”

Never had the supreme power and godhead of the Christ been manifest as in that moment. On her knees Martha cried out, worshiping him :

“Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even he that cometh into the world.”

Then, with all her soul in a strange, uncomprehended ecstasy, she hastened back to the house and called Mary secretly, for she feared to make known the Master's presence lest the news of his return should reach his enemies.

“The Master is here,” she whispered, “and calleth thee.”

When she knew that the Lord had made mention of her in her sorrow, a great longing for his presence came to Mary, and she cast aside the weakness which had held her and went out quickly and came where he was.

But her going was not unnoticed by the friends who were in the house, many of whom had come out from Jerusalem.

“She goeth unto the grave to weep there,” they said, one to another, and they followed her; howbeit they found her not at the grave, but standing with the Master at that place where he had been at first, weeping bitterly.

Never, perhaps, had it been the earthly portion of the Lord to see such havoc wrought by grief in soul and body as he now beheld in the fair and gentle woman before him; for Mary was one whose nature, rich and full and yet delicate in its adjust-

ment, was capable alike of the most elevated joy or of the most devastating sorrow. He saw into the hidden springs of her life and knew the awful blight which death had cast upon her spirit ; he knew it, not only for the sister of Lazarus, but for broken hearts through all the ages.

Then, being troubled, he groaned in spirit ; and he asked :

“Where have ye laid him ?”

The Jews who stood around the sisters and wept with them, answered :

“Lord, come and see.”

Jesus wept. He wept for Mary and her sister, but not for them only. The burden of the whole creation, groaning and travailing in pain together until now, rested upon his spirit in that hour, and his tears were for all human sorrow.

Then said the Jews :

“Behold, how he loved him !”

Silently the company passed down the quiet street, beneath the lengthening shadows of the short winter afternoon ; they came to the home of the sisters, and the friends led Jesus to the tomb in the garden where Lazarus had been laid. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon its opening.

At his command the stone was taken away and, standing before the open grave, Jesus lifted up his eyes and said :

“Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me!”

And when he had prayed, he cried with a loud voice :

“Lazarus, come forth!”

Then he that was dead, bound hand and foot with cerecloths, came forth from the grave, with white face, and wide, uncomprehending eyes, before them all. And they all beheld and bare witness to the great outworking of the power of God through his Son.

“Loose him, and let him go,” was the last brief command; and then, exhausted with the supreme demand of the hour upon him, Jesus turned from the pale and awestruck people who stood about the sisters and Lazarus and the open grave, and entered alone into the house.

Death, and triumph over the power of it, meant more to him in that hour than to Lazarus himself, for the shadows were gathering ever closer, and he knew that his hour was at hand.

In the unspeakable joy and glory of that night, Lazarus and the sisters were left alone, for the Jews withdrew now to their own homes, praising God for his mighty power and glorifying the Christ whom he had sent. But some went their ways unto the Pharisees in Jerusalem and told them what had come to pass in Bethany.

A hurried night meeting of the Sanhedrin was called, and this problem was laid before it :

“What are we to do? for speedy decision must be made. It is a fact, which we can no longer keep out of sight, that this man, the Nazarene, doeth many miracles. Now at this time of crisis—when all men are talking of his power, as shown in the matter of the rabbi in Bethany, Lazarus—if we still let him alone, and suffer things to go as they may, *all* men will believe on him as the Messiah. And what will follow? His teaching worketh ever against all our present conditions and a revolution will doubtless take place. The Romans will stamp it out, as they have done before, but with greater severity, seeing it will surely be far wider than such a movement as that of Judas of Galilee and others (for all men go after the Nazarene), and our place and our nation itself shall be taken away.”

The high priest himself was present that night, Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. In silence he listened for a while to the discussion which followed, and then rising, with a gesture of authority and a look of cold indifference, as if their heated talk was wearisome to him, he said :

“How is it that in such a matter ye multiply needless words? There can be but one answer to the question; that one man should die for the

people, is of small concern. The nation must be preserved!"

This clearly defined opinion from the head of the priesthood was decisive. The council broke up, the commandment being given that at the first opportunity, when it could be done without causing a riot among the people, the Nazarene should be apprehended and his death compassed as speedily thereafter as was expedient.

The action of this night was made known to the household in Bethany by Nicodemus through Adriel, and again the Master was forced to leave Judea. He went thence into the wild, uncultivated hill country known as Ephraim, and there abode.

CHAPTER IV

Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.—*Isaiah*.

SURROUNDED by enclosing hills rising from the northern boundary of the plain of Esdraelon in Galilee, lay the little mountain town of Nazareth. The hilltops were crested with gold from the sun which was sinking into the great sea beyond the western mountain-wall, and long shadows fell athwart the white, flat-roofed houses, while the orange trees, the almond, and the vine gave forth a goodly odor, under the evening breeze, from the terraced gardens.

In a quiet street, remote from the market place, a woman sat at the doorway of her house in the still hour, looking southward toward the plain, beyond which lay Samaria and still beyond, Judea and the Holy City. At her feet a little fair-haired child was playing.

The face of the woman, although without the fullness and bloom of youth, was beautiful of feature and of an exceeding patience and sweetness of aspect. The large, dark eyes, once brilliant, had been dimmed by many tears, but their

light was only softened, not dulled; and the rich crown of hair was still fair and bright. The figure was slender, and of an almost youthful grace; the hands, which lay quietly in her lap as she rested from her busy tasks, were white and long and shapely; the dull blue outer robe, and the pure white *cethoneth*, reaching from throat to ankle and covering the arms to the wrists, were of exquisite neatness.

Bending to caress the child who was steadying himself by holding her garments in his tiny hands—he was her daughter's child—Mary lifted her eyes and beheld a stranger approaching through the empty street. As he came nearer, she was sure that it was to her own humble home that his steps were directed, and her heart beat fast with the hope of tidings of one far away for whom her soul longed unspeakably.

It was true. Pausing on the uneven pavement before the house, the stranger made a salutation, courteous and profound, and Mary beheld a man still young, of vigorous form and noble face, whose eyes spoke a deep reverence for herself, and whose full-toned, joyous voice exclaimed:

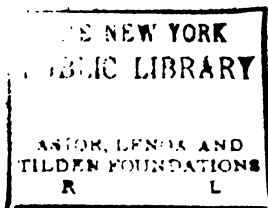
“All hail to thee, Mary, mother of our master, Jesus!”

“Thou art welcome in the name of my Son,” was the response; and rising she bade the stran-



San Giovanni Evangelista

146/147



ger—it was Adriel—enter the quiet house; and there she gave him food and water and the rest which he needed after his journey.

When he had eaten and drunk, Adriel unfolded to Mary the errand which had brought him into the north country.

“Lazarus, a rabbi of Bethany, a man approved in deed and word, and well beloved of thy son—who hath wrought for his sake a mighty and awful work, even that of calling him from the dead—hath sent me to bid thee to his house for the coming Passover.”

“Cometh my son unto the Passover?” the mother asked with trembling lips.

“We think that he cometh. We both hope and fear it, dear lady. It hath been in the thought of the sisters of Lazarus that in coming under their roof thou mightest have days of quiet counsel with him thou lovest; for it is even as a home unto Jesus—the safe refuge, always open to him, and unto which he oft resorteth. What sayest thou? Wilt thou accept my escort, and give unto thy son the joy of thy presence to welcome him when he cometh?” and Adriel bent to look with eager but reverent desire into the sweet, sad mother’s face.

“Thinkest thou that the time of trial which he hath foretold is nigh at hand?” she asked, looking up at Adriel with piteous eyes.

His face grew grave with suppressed feeling.

"We shall defend him as we can," he answered, "but the clouds are gathering fast."

"I will go with thee, Adriel," Mary said quietly, and a stillness fell upon them both ; only the little child who had fallen asleep sobbed under its breath as if in a troubled dream.

In that same hour Mary made ready all things for her departure, and it was appointed between them that they should begin the journey to Judea early the following day. Then, with careful kindness, she led Adriel to the small, clean chamber where he was to rest that night, and so parted from him ; but she herself spent all the hours of the night in prayer. As she knelt alone in the silent house from which she was so soon to depart, a strange sense of coming woe overwhelmed her, for the Spirit witnessed with her spirit that in the world which she was about to enter, beyond the sheltering hills of Nazareth, grief and pain awaited her in full measure. Again she seemed to hear the voice of the holy Simeon as on that bright morning when she had carried her sweet son, a babe in her arms, into the temple : "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul."

How strangely those words had struck into the strong joy of her young motherhood, thrilling yet with the praise and worship of angels and of men.

Greatly she had marveled then what they might mean to her, whom the angel had called the blessed among women, one who had found the favor of the Most High. On this night, taught by many sorrows already borne and by the sense of deeper ones yet to come, she better understood their import.

She remembered all the way along which the hand of God had led her. There had been the child life in that same humble home—how radiant with the innocence and purity of the spotless Son whose every word and look and act had been in harmony with the law of love, but in all other ways like those of other children! The later years, when he had grown grave and thoughtful, were yet the sweetest in her memory, by reason of the strong protecting care with which his love had surrounded her, so that even her widowhood had been glorified, and she had not been as one bereft or alone.

But then had come that day when he had heard the voice in the wilderness, piercing even to the high valley where their little village lay, and he had laid aside the tools with which he had worked for her support, and had left the home, no more to return. Little by little she had learned that in the old way he belonged to her no more, and that the time past of their close abiding together must suffice. For the future he had a great and awful work unto which the voice of God called him, and

the Spirit impelled him ; a work upon which, almost from the first, the shadow of death and defeat seemed to rest.

And now what was before him ? A nameless dread had filled her at the word and look of Adriel, and an urgency had come upon her to hasten to the south and meet Jesus while yet there was time. With all the infinite outgoing of her mother-heart she prayed unto the Father for him, with strong crying and with tears, and only as the dawnlight crept into the room did she rise and seek her bed for an hour of rest, a pale, sorrowful woman in whose face there was yet a divine calm and strength.

It was night at Bethany. The housetop garden was deserted, save for one woman who crouched upon the floor, her face buried in the drapery of a couch, weeping bitterly. It was the sister of Lazarus, Mary.

A step was heard on the stairs and Adriel crossed the floor, seeking out the weeping woman whose form was revealed to him only by her white dress under the pale starlight. He touched her shoulder with gentlest reverence.

“Wherefore weepst thou, Mary ?” he asked.

“Because,” she moaned rather than spoke, “I know now, I see and feel it ; and before, although

he told us plainly, it was never real, I could not comprehend."

"That he must suffer death?" asked Adriel very low.

"Oh, Adriel, thou knowest! Of what else can I think since I have seen her, his mother?" And with fast-flowing tears Mary continued: "Is there not in her face, with all its patience and its quiet, the very shadow of death? Thou knowest that my mother died while I was but a child, and I have guessed rather than known what the love of a mother may mean. But as she sat with us to-night after her coming, and as she looked at my brother the while he spake of her son, I saw in her eyes what I never saw in a face before, except in his, a love and a sorrow unspeakable, a revelation of what depths the heart can know, even beyond what I felt before he called Lazarus back into life."

"I marked it also," said Adriel sadly.

"And dost thou not feel even as I do now, the truth of that which he spake?"

Adriel bowed his head in silence.

"To-night," exclaimed Mary with fresh tears, "I see it all before me. *He is to die*, Adriel; the light is to be put out from his eyes whose look has been life to all of us; he will not save himself; rather will he give himself unto the uttermost. Only a little longer can we clasp his hand or sit at his feet

to hear his words. The mother's heart is ready to be broken, and oh, my brother, mine is too."

"Mary," asked Adriel very gently, "hast thou forgotten what the Master said unto the disciples, of which John hath told us?"

"What meanest thou?"

"The Son of man, he said, must suffer death; but I remember well that he said also, that he shall be raised again from the dead."

"Adriel, believest thou that the Master truly said this?" And Mary clasped both his hands and looked up into his eyes with imploring desire.

"Yea, verily," he answered, "I believe it, and thou must take it into thine heart, Mary; and believing it, thou canst bear even the thought of his death, sorrowing not as do such as have no hope."

For a little while there was silence, and then Mary said, musing:

"He had the power over death which brought again from the dead our brother, but who shall say unto *him*, 'Come forth'? Nevertheless there is comfort in thy word, and on it I will stay my soul and be quiet."

CHAPTER V

Messiah, the prince, shall be cut off and shall have nothing.—
Daniel.

AT an appointed place, a village of Southern Galilee, the Master was waiting for the coming of the friends with whom he purposed to journey to Jerusalem for the Passover feast now at hand.

Simon Peter and the sons of Zebedee and others of the Twelve had gone some time before to their homes in Galilee for a visit to their friends before the feast. Jesus had not gone with them and now he awaited their return hourly, as he sat by the village well and looked wistfully across the level plain to the northern hills, beyond which lay the blue waters of the lake he loved so well. He longed for one more day in the home at Capernaum, and for another look in the faces of those who had in the old days followed him with joyous gratitude whithersoever he went. But those faces were turned away from him now; he was despised and rejected by the men whose children he had healed and saved, and he could not go thither.

Off toward the west, behind those soft green

hills, was Nazareth, his own home from infancy to ripened manhood; but neither could he go there. Twice over had his old neighbors rejected him; even his brethren did not believe on him. His mother—ah, if he could but once more, before the end, look into her loving eyes! She had never held aloof or looked coldly upon him. If she had not always understood, at least she had always loved.

Even as he thus mused a little group of pilgrims could be seen in the distance, approaching from the north along the straight, white road, and Thomas, who had remained with his Master, exclaimed, "They are coming!" well pleased to discern in the company the familiar forms of his fellow-disciples.

The first to reach the Master was Simon Peter, but he was soon followed by the sons of Zebedee, who brought with them their mother, Salome, well known and beloved of Jesus; and with them came the noble matron Joanna. Accompanying her was a younger woman of rare beauty, with large, soft eyes and fair, abundant hair, who, as soon as she came nigh, fell at the feet of the Master in adoring joy and humility. This was Mary of Magdala; for the space of nearly a year she had not seen him who had restored her soul and won all her heart. Philip and Andrew too were of the company.

All day they tarried at that same place, waiting for their number to be completed ; and when the day was far spent, Nathanael came from his home in Cana and with him were Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and other friends from Nazareth.

From this time the Master's face was steadfastly set to go unto Jerusalem. The women and disciples pleaded with him that he should not place himself again in the power of the council, but he answered them solemnly :

“The time is come when the Son of man shall be received up. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished !”

And so they journeyed through Samaria ; but this was unlike all other journeys, for as they walked the face of the Christ grew ever sterner, and he walked no more among them in friendly wise ; but leaving them he went on alone before them, wrapt in mysterious and solemn thought, as one who sees death just before him. A great awe fell upon the little company as they saw the change which had come upon their leader ; in silence they followed him, being amazed and greatly afraid, and no one durst approach him or ask him any question. Even Simon Peter was silent ; but he watched the Master, his faithful, dog-like eyes never once leaving his swiftly advancing form.

Later on that same day, Jesus called the Twelve again to come to him and he spoke unto them plainly of that which awaited him.

“Behold,” he said, “we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests; and they shall condemn him to death, and they shall deliver him unto the Romans. They shall mock him and shall spit upon him and shall scourge him and shall kill him; but the third day he shall rise from the dead.”

Speechless with fear and dread the disciples listened to his words; but even yet, with the sure declaration of his death, they could not let go of their hope that a great reaction would take place and that he should be accepted as Messiah by the nation.

It was on the following day that, as they were still journeying toward Jerusalem, Salome with her two sons took the Master aside, and kneeling at his feet she asked him to grant her a request. Looking upon the earnest face of the mother and upon John, the disciple whom he had ever loved, his deep sadness relaxed, and he made answer:

“What wilt thou that I should do for thee?”

The fires of her high ambition were hardly veiled by the gentleness of her womanhood as she made answer:

“Lord, grant that these, my two sons, may sit,

the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom!"

The Master's face clouded, for the persistent misunderstanding from such a source, smote him sharply. Nevertheless his rebuke to the selfish and unworthy claim of Salome and the aspiration of her sons was as gentle as it was sad. But the ten heard what was said, and they were filled with a great indignation, which all the Master's authority could hardly restrain.

"Whosoever among you will be chief," he said, with unflinching patience, "let him be your servant; even as I, your Master, am come not to be ministered unto but to minister; and to give my life a ransom for many."

And so the stern, heroic journey to Jerusalem was pursued.

CHAPTER VI

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion : shout, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy king cometh unto thee : he is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.—*Zechariah*.

A RECORD KEPT BY PHILIP.

“ Bethany; April —.

“ **W**HEN we reached the gate of Jericho, a blind man, who sat by the wayside begging, cried out to the Master for help, and his sight was restored. This caused a great joy and excitement among the people and many joined our company that they might still see him who had such power.

“ We stopped a few hours in Jericho and rested in the house of a publican named Zaccheus, unto whom the Lord showed great kindness. Leaving there we came on toward Jerusalem, and entered into Bethany at the sun-setting, two days ago.

“ The people here still think and talk of nothing but the great wonder concerning Lazarus, and when the Master came into the town they were wild with joy. It hath been told me—howbeit I hardly believe it—that so great is the excitement in this matter, many coming to Bethany from all

this region to look upon a man raised from the dead, that it would please the chief priests if Lazarus himself could be put out of the way. It seemeth to me an idle tale. The Master lodgeth in the house of Lazarus, and his mother hath come thither also from Nazareth.

“Last night the whole town gathered and made a great supper to show the Master honor. It was held in the house of one Simon, who hath the largest banquet room in the place, but all the people joined in making the feast, and the house was full.

“All we were there, and Lazarus himself sat next unto the Lord. Martha was among the women who served, and she went about with a joy and spirit in her very step which made the heart glad to see. I looked for Mary, the younger sister, and for a time I saw her not, but when the supper was over she entered the room.

“She hath a lovely face. It was sad to see the change in it after the death of her brother, for all its bloom and beauty fled, and it was hollow and ghastly white. But last night it was more beautiful than I had ever seen it, with a depth of sweetness in the eyes and on the lips which I have never seen in the face of a woman, and a faint flush of health and gladness in the cheeks. And yet, when her eyes rested upon the Master, I saw the great

tears spring up in them and fall fast. Verily, she hath a tender spirit ; but there was somewhat of unspoken sorrow in her look which I could not understand.

“ I watched her coming. She passed around the chief table to the side of the Master as he reclined, and then I saw that she held in her hands a beautiful alabaster flask, of quaint and rare device. It was large, for it contained an entire litra of the precious spikenard oil, the costliest of all ointments. Martha hath told me since that it belonged to their mother, the fair wife of Ithamar, in the days of their great wealth ; and the sisters have kept it all these years as of greatest worth, because it was hers.

“ Pressing the frail alabaster between her hands above the Master's head Mary broke it, and anointed his head and feet, even as did the woman when we were in Galilee. The whole house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

“ I marked at once that some of our number were not well pleased, and Iscariot spake out roughly (the man groweth less and less to my liking, with his frown and his crafty eye) saying :

“ ‘ Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor ? ’

“ The man hath charge of the monies for us all, and I have thought ere this that he liketh it best

when there is much to handle. I have wondered—but no, I will not say it. If he thought his zeal for the poor would please the Master, Iscariot was mistaken, for with a long look into the face of Mary, a look which seemed to tell of a higher sympathy than he had found elsewhere, Jesus said :

“ ‘Let her alone. The poor ye have always with you, but me ye shall not have always. She hath done what she could. Against the day of my burying hath she done this. And wheresoever my name shall be made known this also that Mary hath done shall be told as a memorial of her.’

“It was a strange saying! I know not what it meaneth, this repeated warning of his speedy death. Such a thing shall not be, for we, the Twelve, will guard him night and day, and he hath a great following now among the people.

“Doth Mary believe it?

“The first day of the Passover week.”

“This afternoon we went into the city, and in all the years that we have known the Master, we have never seen such honor shown him as at this time. If he had been a king he could not have been hailed with higher acclamation.

“When we left Bethany a joyful crowd came with us, and when we had climbed the hill to the brow where we could look across the valley westward to

the holy city, the Master sent two of us into the little village of Bethphage just below, that we might bring him a colt on which to ride the remaining distance.

“ While we halted there, the news that he was coming spread in every direction, and it was taken even unto the Galilean camp near the garden at the foot of Olivet ; and there were many who had known him well last year, and who were ashamed now that they had treated him with such ingratitude. Thus it was that when we had brought the colt and had laid our garments upon it and the Master sat thereon, a great crowd ran before us, spreading their garments in the way, and they cut branches from the date-palms at the side of the road, and from the olive trees, and them too, they strewed before him as he rode on and others waved them high above their heads, and all they that ran before and they that followed us cried with loud and joyful voices :

“ ‘ Hosanna to the son of David ! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ! Hosanna in the highest ! ’

“ This is the first time that the Master hath come to Jerusalem since the feast of Dedication in the winter. And when we came into it the whole city was stirred, and the porches and streets were crowded with people who were asking, ‘ Who is





ENTRY OF CHRIST INTO JERUSALEM.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

this?' Then we all lifted up our voices with one accord with the multitude, and shouted, 'This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth in Galilee!'

"When they heard this the citizens turned away, but we shouted so much the more.

"It was thus that we came into the temple. Here there were Pharisees who looked on and were greatly displeased—for even in the temple the children who were with us ceased not to cry hosanna!—and they spake unto the Lord that he should rebuke them. But he said unto them:

"'I tell you that if these should hold their peace to-day, the very stones would immediately cry out.'

"All men looked for some great, final act to-night from the Master. If he had asked a crown the multitude would have given it to him, and this was even feared—it hath been told me—by the Sanhedrin. But he returned quietly to Bethany when it was dark, and now he is alone with his mother in the house of Lazarus.

"Bethany, the second day of the week.

"To-day we went again into Jerusalem and on the way the Master sought for figs on a tree by the wayside, being hungry, but the tree was barren, having only leaves. We heard him say as he left the tree, 'Let no man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever.' It was a strange word.

“When we were in the temple he accused the men in the bazaars of defiling the house of God with their buying and selling. His rebuke was stern, and they departed from before him ashamed.

“Later, while we were still in the temple, there came certain Greeks who had come from their far country in the west, beyond the great sea, and they spake unto me, saying,

“‘Sir, we would see Jesus.’

“They were sincere and courteous men, and I was assured that they sought him of a true purpose, and not because they were curious, as many are, concerning him. Accordingly, Andrew and I brought them unto Jesus, and they spake with him.

“Perhaps the reverent desire of these foreigners stirred in the Master a longing to go beyond the bounds of our narrow land and of our harsh and unbelieving people, and bring the news of his kingdom unto a gentler and freer-hearted nation. I know not, but never have I seen him so swayed by feeling as when he spake with these same Greeks.

“‘Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,’ he said, ‘it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit,’ and this he said, I thought, and so did Andrew, unto himself rather than unto them, and in stern, solemn wise, as if rebuking his own heart.

“Afterward he said further: ‘He that loveth his

life shall lose it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me.'

"Again there came the great wave of mysterious dismay and sorrow—I could see it in his eyes—and he cried out, as if in anguish :

"'Now is my soul troubled ; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this coming hour! Nay ; for this cause am I come unto this hour. Father, I ask this only, glorify thy name!'

"Even at that word, a strange voice, which spake not as men speak, was heard. Some men which stood by said that it thundered ; and the Greeks were sure that an angel had spoken unto him. For me, I heard the very words, and the voice was, I believe, the voice that spake unto him on Mount Hermon, whereof Simon Peter hath often told me. The words were, '*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again!*'

"Bethany, the third day of the week.

"When we passed by, going into the city this morning, we noticed the fig tree which the Master declared barren yesterday, and we marveled, for it was wholly withered away. No miracle save this hath he ever wrought which was not to restore or to make glad. I know not the full meaning, but it seemeth unto me to be even a parable in

visible form, and I have been thinking much of what the Master said on the first day of the week when he beheld Jerusalem after so long an absence. Amid all the joy and shouting of the people he wept, and we marveled to hear him say concerning the holy city, that the days should come when a trench should be cast about it, and it should be compassed around on every side, and be laid even with the ground, and not one stone left upon another. Much I wonder when these things shall be.

“It hath been a day of sharp and bitter conflict, and to-night the Master hath returned unto the house of Lazarus forspent and exceeding sad.

“He taught in the temple for an hour in the morning in his old, gentle way, and the people were glad to hear him, and crowded the courts to get near him. The city is full of strangers now, for the Passover feast is in two days. While he was speaking an opening was made in the crowd, and a procession of chief priests in full official robes, followed by many of the members of the Sanhedrin, came up with great pomp and dignity and challenged him to say by what authority he spake and worked miracles.

“Hour after hour they stood thus questioning him, and seeking to draw him into controversy. By turns they flattered and threatened him, but

through it all he was himself—can I say more?—patient, majestic.

“The Sadducees also came in their proud state, and with patronizing smiles they too sought to entangle him in his words, but it was in vain. The inmost thoughts of their hearts lay bare before him, and all their wiles came to naught.

“At the last, certain whom we had not seen before, who appeared worthy men and plain citizens, stepped out from the crowd where they had stood, and to them the priests and elders gave way. These spake and said with seeming honesty:

“‘Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly the way of God, respecting not the persons of them of high degree, wherefore we, who are plain men, would ask of thee one question: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar?’

“Straight into their faces the Master looked, and it seemed unto me that they could ill bear his look. It was a hard question to answer without giving offense to the Jews or to the Romans.

“‘Why tempt ye me?’ he asked sternly, and then commanded them briefly, ‘Show me a penny.’

“One of their number handed him a denarius.

“‘Whose image and inscription hath it?’ he asked, holding the coin out toward them in his hand.

“‘Cæsar’s,’ was the answer.

“ ‘Then render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.’

“The fearless authority with which he spake, and the lofty wisdom of his words, silenced them all, and after that the whole assembly went away, for no man durst ask him any more questions.

“In the crowd, as I passed out of the temple, I heard a Pharisee say, with dark looks and anger, unto one of the chief priests :

“ ‘Ye see that ye prevail nothing. All men are gone after him.’

“It is even so.

“Adriel saith that those men who asked the Master concerning the tribute money were spies. It may be so ; I know not. He remained in Jerusalem last night, being deeply stirred to speak in the defense of the Master. I greatly fear his boldness will bring him into danger.

“The fourth day of the week.”

“The Master spent this day alone in the house of Lazarus, being worn and weary. Simon Peter and Andrew and I went late into the city, and in the temple we learned that the thing which I feared hath befallen Adriel. He is of an impetuous nature and cannot restrain his indignation when men speak against the Master. He hath before this greatly offended Annas, and yet the knowledge of his

princely birth hath until now protected him. He is a strong champion for us, by reason of his noble bearing and swift, convincing speech, for we are rude and uncouth men and little trained in argument, but he hath the learning and refinement of the Greeks, and a dauntless courage which belongeth to himself alone.

“ Howbeit, to-day he spake in the temple something too rashly concerning the stealthy plots of the priests, and a great uproar ensuing, he was laid hold of by the officers and lodged in some inner cell of the fortress. I am told that this was brought about by the wily Annas ; he hath had an eye on Adriel for some time past. Much it grieveth me to-night to think of his brave spirit behind prison bars.

“ Mount Olivet, the night before the Preparation.

“ I am writing in haste on a tablet brought with me, under the light of a single torch. It is after midnight, and we have come out hither unto Gethsemane with the Master. Later, we shall go on our way unto Bethany for the night, as is our custom ; but the Master loveth to resort unto this quiet garden, and he hath asked us to wait here while he is gone to pray beyond, where the great olive trees make blacker shadows. Simon Peter is with him and the sons of Zebedee.

“We have eaten the Passover together in an upper room, we alone with the Lord. Tongue or pen can never make known the sweetness of these hours spent with him. Never hath he so revealed unto us himself, his oneness with God, and the tenderness of his love toward us, unworthy as we are.

“He prayed for us with great outpouring love, and with words that told that he was soon to leave us, and this melted our hearts. He saith that the time is come that he shall leave the world and return unto the Father, but that we shall not be left comfortless.

“I know not. If he, my Lord, were taken from me, I can think of nothing which could comfort me.

“There seem to be lights as of many torches approaching from the bridge over the Kedron. I see them plainly through the olive trees. They have turned to pass this way. It is strange! I see Roman soldiers now and the dress of the temple guard. What may it mean? I can write no more.”

BOOK IV

THE SOUND OF MANY VOICES

Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

—*F. W. H. Myers.*

HAD it not been for that look I should lay
hands upon my life, even as Iscariot hath!
Wretched man that I am!
his shame seemeth not SIMON PETER SPEAKS
blacker than my own, and
I wonder that I yet live; but—there was that look.
It said, “My poor, faithless Peter, though thou hast
denied me, I love thee still!”

How was it possible that I could deny that I
knew him? What demon of craven fear possessed
me last night? When that girl and the others in
the palace taunted me with being a Galilean, the
coward heart in me melted like wax, and all the cour-
age of which I was so sure turned to meanest fear.

In the garden before all the soldiers I was not
afraid, but drew my sword in rash and useless
defense of him. Methinks that pleased him
hardly better. Why is it that I leap ever impet-
uous to the extreme of boldness or of fear?

My whole heart belongs to him and yet I am
ever in the fret and fever of love. John knows its
calm. His love for the Master is not deeper than
mine and yet it is a love that better pleaseth him.
There is rest in John's soul; in mine are tumult
and storm.

O my Master ! come unto me once more ! Again let me look into thine eyes and tell thee that I love thee. Yea, with a deathless love, that never again shall stand in fear of men or devils.

Even in the garden I grieved him. "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" he asked. It was for very grief that our eyes were so heavy. John saith the same. And yet we should have been watching with him there under the olive trees and suffering with him those pangs which wrought the strong agony, and the sweat which I saw falling from him like great drops of blood. O my Lord, why was this unto thee?

The bitterest is that they scourged him, those brutal soldiers in the prætorium ; him, the spotless one, holy, harmless, undefiled. We beheld him afterward, John and James and I, when he hung upon the cross—we who were eye-witnesses of his majesty when we saw him in the holy mount ! Angels covered him with glory unspeakable, but men covered him with his own blood !

Last night—it was even at this very hour—I said unto him, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." It was as we walked out into the mount of Olives. Vain boast ! But tonight, here alone in the blackness of this darkness, with the light of my life gone out, again I say it, whatever is before me :

“Master, though I should die for thee, yet will I never more deny thee.” And by this I will abide though heaven and earth pass away.

IT was that snake Annas and his brood who brought the man to me. By the gods! I believe the old schemer had a private grudge of PONTIUS PILATE SPEAKS his own to settle, for he hung on with his yellow old fangs hard set, like death itself.

These barbarians can make haste when they choose; they require a week to keep each of their perpetual festivals, but they found time between midnight and sunrise to bring this man before their court—I am told that it was not their Sanhedrin, but a court made up for the occasion—and to try him and condemn him to death. They had need of haste, for Jerusalem is full of Galileans now, and the man it seemeth, had great influence in Galilee. Those Galileans, when once their blood is stirred, are capable of anything. Annas was wise.

I would that Cæsar would give these accursed people liberty to put the breakers of their law to death themselves. It was an empty form to bring the man to me, and it maddens me to be made the

mere tool for their malice. What do I know about their beggarly scruples?

It was all false. The court was false; the trial was false; the accusation of sedition was false, and they knew that I knew it to be. Falsest of all was their hypocritical cry: "We have no king but Cæsar!" It sickened me; so did their contemptible sanctity. They were full of murder and hatred, but too holy to enter my judgment hall.

They said that he called himself their king. Well he might. He had a kingly mien and an eye that would make a man tremble. No Cæsar ever had a look like that. I called him their king; I had the better of them there!

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

That was the inscription I wrote to be placed above his head. They came again and wearied me to have it altered, but I was done with them.

He was their king, as one can say of a man above his fellows. There was a purity and quietness in him which made them look like very furies with their cruel eyes and their snarling clamor. Hounds! they barked and bayed for his blood, and would take nothing less. I tried to give them coarser game, and draw them off the scent, offering them one Barabbas, who led a low riot here and killed a man or two a month ago, but they cared not for him.

I sent him to Antipas down to the old Asmo-næan palace, where he is sojourning during the feast, when I heard that he was from Galilee; and I hoped then to be rid of the matter, but they brought him back in an hour.

I saw Antipas during the day and he was in friendly mood, and seemed to have forgotten that little trouble of a while ago. It pleased him that I deferred to him in the matter; and furthermore he saith that the man's fame hath been great in Galilee, and he hath for a long time desired to see some miracle done by him. However he was disappointed, for the Nazarene would not even speak in his presence, for all his many questions, and he could but send him again unto me.

He spake few words before me, and they were mysterious, not such as criminals speak, for he sought nothing to defend himself, and cared not for any threats. It was strange—for a moment, when he said, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above," I seemed to myself as if on trial before him, not he before me. A strange and foolish fancy!

Procula had a troubled dream in the night just past, concerning this very Nazarene. She had heard of him and of words he spake in the temple early in the week, and even while I sat on the judgment seat, she sent a messenger to me, bid-

ding me have nothing to do against him, for he was a just man.

By Apollo! I did my best in the matter, but I prevailed nothing. It was useless. "If thou let this man go," they cried, "thou art not Cæsar's friend!" They have tried that game before, and won in it, and so they won again. I bade them crucify him themselves, but that they could not do, and so, at last, I yielded. The Nazarene was innocent doubtless; I washed my hands of his blood before them all. But what would you? A man must live; and Tiberius hath a jealous eye.

It was said among them that the man had said that he was *the Son of God*. Did not the gods of old come to earth in human form? If that were truth and not fable, they would have had eyes like his. To my last hour I shall see them. And to have put out the light of them in death—! Nay, but the Jews themselves said: "His blood be on us and on our children." Am I not free?

I HAVE seen scores of men crucified, but never one like this. I was near him from the first; I saw him even
 THE CENTURION SPEAKS when that false-hearted traitor kissed him as a sign unto us, saying, "Hail, Master," and for very

awe of him we all fell to the ground. We did not take him ; he gave himself up to us.

We led him back into the city to the house of old Annas first, hurrying through the darkness, and then to the palace of the high priest. He was quite alone. Not one of his friends came with him,* as far as I could see. They were cowards all.

We could not go into the palace of Caiaphas, being Romans, and it was a long watch. We waited outside until the day dawned. Among those who went in while we waited I thought I saw the Galilean who drew his sword there in the garden, and a young man with him who was at Golgotha afterward.

When they brought him out just at sunrise and we started over to Mount Zion to the governor's palace, I marveled that he was still so calm and undisturbed, albeit his countenance was white and haggard. It was even so afterward when he was scourged, and in the guard room of the prætorium. While I was telling off my men to lead him and the two others who were to suffer at the same time to Golgotha, some of the soldiers, rough fellows, arrayed him in one of their red cloaks, even made a crown out of thorns and pressed it down upon his temples, and put a reed in his hands, and then in mock reverence they bended

the knee before him and saluted him "King of the Jews."

All this, I say, he suffered patiently, seeking no release, and what was yet greater, without losing his strange majesty of mien. Yet he was a young and gentle man, unused to roughness or hardships one might plainly see; a man with delicate, albeit well-knit body and mild, beautiful face.

Why should a nation, of which he was the fairest I have ever seen, and the noblest, seek to put such a one to death? This remaineth a mystery unto me.

As we passed through the streets many women followed him bitterly weeping, unto whom he spake comforting words; but his strength gave way soon, and we impressed a Cyrenian, whom we made to bear the cross until we came to the place of execution, which is called Calvary.

It was the hardest task that ever fell to me to cause this man to be nailed to the cross. Even as the nails were driven he cried out, but not in complaint. Ye gods! He was praying for us who crucified him:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Did mortal man ever so speak?

Even while the soldiers were parting his garments among themselves, and casting dice for his

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



GOLGOTHA.

the most important factors in determining
the quality of the work environment are
the physical and social conditions
of the work environment, and the
relationship between the worker and the
work environment.



coat, which was fine and without a seam, and while the two thieves, who were crucified on either side of him, were reviling him, as were also many others who stood by, there fell a strange, unearthly darkness over us all. Yet it was high noon. How could this be?

Many of his followers had gathered on the hill, and among them were women of gentle and noble aspect, and several councillors, venerable and worthy men. Such persons have I never seen at a crucifixion before; and their anguish was very great. Something in his countenance, even at the worst, seemed to tell me that there was a weight upon him far heavier to bear than the pangs which rent his body; but despite all, he had the same unconquerable patience, and spake comfortably unto his mother, and with great kindness even unto the thief beside him.

He had been but six hours upon the cross, and this strange darkness was still over all the sky when, after we had given him vinegar for his thirst, he cried aloud suddenly, and then said:

“It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!” and with those words he was dead.

Why should he, strong and with a firm and perfect body, have endured so short a time? I have my own belief: it was sorrow that broke his heart.

In very truth it was broken, as was shown when a soldier pierced his side with a spear presently and there flowed out both blood and water.

Now there is something still to follow: When the spirit of the Nazarene fled, the earth beneath the hill shook and trembled and the rocks were rent, and for a time in that unearthly darkness I believed that the end of all things had come.

What could it signify that heaven should be darkened and earth shaken? What signified the divine patience of the Nazarene?

Truly this was the son of God.

IT was Judas, the man from Kerioth, who went unto the priests, and he was one of the Twelve. He used to buy food for them all and he carried their money. He had a cold and a sullen eye. I have seen him in the market places and in the temple courts, and I could not be mistaken. I saw him coming out of the inner chamber of the high priest on a night early in the week. He kept close in the shadow of the wall and passed me with his head dropped low, but I knew him, and the sight of him there perplexed me greatly.

Now I know to what intent he was with the

priests. The man asked money of them and he would betray his Master into their hands quietly, that there might be no tumult. A chance like this was all they waited for, and they were glad and covenanted to give him thirty pieces of silver.

This morning, during the hours of the trial, he went again unto the chief priests in the temple, so one who was present hath told me, and brought again the money in his hand and said, "I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood"; and all his life would he have given then to undo the betrayal. But the priests looked at him in contempt. They wanted nothing more of him. "What is that to us?" they asked coldly; "see thou to that."

He is dead now. He threw the pieces of silver down on the temple pavement and went out and hanged himself, hurrying before his Master into the place of departed spirits.

"Traitor!" we all say and loathe his name. But are there, it may be, other ways of betrayal? My heart hath its own bitterness, and a voice within it asketh continually: Is not silence betrayal? Oh, my God, lay not this sin at my door!

Now, at last, all men shall know that I am a follower of the Nazarene. How small my place in the Sanhedrin seemeth to-night, my safety, my life itself! All, all would I give to bring back him

who to-day hath entered into the eternal silence ; but it is too late.

We went together, Joseph and I, unto the governor at the palace and begged the body, that it might not be cast into the black valley of shame, and he consented. We thought he seemed strangely troubled and impressed in the matter. So then we brought the myrrh and aloes and the linen cloths, and had all things ready, as far as may be, until after the Sabbath.

No strange hand touched his blessed form after the soldier pierced his side. With the young men, his disciples, we took him down from the cross, and the women were there also ; only young John, into whose keeping the Master had given his mother at the very last, had taken her away, for she fainted and was nigh unto death. Alas for this night ! The Mother of Sorrows shall she henceforth be called. The sword hath pierced her soul.

Peaceful and majestic was the face of him we loved in death, but oh, the piteousness of the rending and racking of his body, young and strong and pure ; and all we stood by and could not save him, and he would not save himself.

And now, thank God, he is at rest. We have laid him in the new sepulchre in Joseph's garden, nigh unto Calvary, and we have rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre.

This poor service alone was left us. Remember me, O my God, for good.

NIGHT hath come. Its silence is welcome after the passion of this awful day. Tomorrow is the Sabbath. Will it bring peace unto the city of Jerusalem, which hath rejected him? LAZARUS SPEAKS

The moon fills the garden with strange and shifting shadows. Yonder its light falls full upon a great white stone; it is even the one which our Lord bade them take away from before the tomb—the tomb whence his own voice called me, on that day.

Men glorified God in him in that hour; but the chief priests took counsel together against the Lord and against the Anointed One.

It is over now. They have done unto him even as they would.

It is as if a star-white flower had blossomed out of the mire of a stagnant pool, and the mire, helpless to dim its whiteness, had overwhelmed it with its hateful flood.

The sign of the Roman cross on the paschal lamb hath been fulfilled.

With his mother and the women from Galilee, I and Martha stood by; and we lived and beheld

the soldiers as they crucified him, the Son of God. And, for all the shame and pain and pity of it, it was yet the most sublime hour in the history of our nation. The sun was darkened; the earth trembled; and the veil of the temple, in that same hour, was rent in twain.

What meant that last majestic portent?

What but this, that the innermost heart of all our great body of type and ritual hath found its last and complete expression in the offering, once for all, of the Lamb of God? What need we any longer of priest or temple, burnt-offering or sacrifice? Christ, our Passover, hath been sacrificed for us!

Am I wrong in this? Is it not to this that Esaias pointeth when he saith: "He was wounded for our transgressions . . . The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all . . . as a lamb that is led to the slaughter"?

His blood he hath shed freely; as he spake once in the temple—it was last winter, at the feast of Dedication, I remember—"I lay down my life for the sheep, no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." And shall it not be if, in time past, the blood of bulls and of goats sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, that the blood of the Christ who hath now offered himself without spot to God, shall much more cleanse the spirit?

And why doth our nation, stumbling at the lowliness of the Nazarene, reject him as the promised Messiah, save that they err through the proudness of their heart? Hath he not fulfilled all that was foretold by the prophets? He was of the seed of Abraham, of the line of Israel, of the tribe of Judah, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; yea, and he came of the house and lineage of David; he was born in Bethlehem, born as saith Esaias of a virgin—for Mary of Nazareth hath made known unto me the mystery of his birth. Are not all things fulfilled in him?

And yet, if all this were not so, he would still have been the greatest of the sons of men by his own indwelling power, the power of a sinless life. Philip saith that the Roman, Pontius Pilate, hath said: "I find no fault in the man." Verily his words signified more than he knew, for he hath in himself broken the chain from the first man Adam to the present hour, for all have sinned; but in him there was no sin. How could this be, but that the nature of God, as well as of man, was in him? He was a new, supreme creation, the *God-man*.

My father greatly desired to see this day, as elect souls among our nation have from the first, yet did he not reach to the conception of such a Messiah. A glorified Maccabean hero was in his thought.

In a sense he too gave his life for the nation. Fearless and self-sacrificing was he, a prince among men; but his thoughts were of the earth, earthly, and rose not beyond a kingdom of this world. Like a tarnished toy that old hope showeth by the side of the new, divine kingdom of the quiet king. How wide the contrast between a man like Adriel, even as he is to-day, and the Nazarene! I beheld each in the hour of his betrayal by a traitorous friend; the one mad with impotent rage and vengeful hatred, the other commanding even the Roman soldiers by the calm serenity of his presence.

Would that Ithamar, my father, could have witnessed the transcendent power and majesty of the Christ of God! He would not have erred—patriot that he was to the core—as do our priests and rulers through lust of a narrow, national power.

Verily the thoughts of God are not as the thoughts of men. When he, even Ithamar, in his devotion to his nation, thought to raise up a deliverer for it, he sought a young prince of the blood and placed him amid all of luxury and culture which his great wealth and a city's splendor could command, with slaves to come at his call and all things planned to develop the power of an imperial will. To what issue? The man broke down under it.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



HOLY WOMEN AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST.



But when God would bring forth a deliverer, he sendeth a child into the home of a humble peasant in the highlands of the north, far from the city and its refinements. The child is trained in hardy simplicity, in humility and obedience, and only the inborn power and purity of his nature, bursting through the limitations of his life, proclaim that here is indeed the man born to be king.

Slowly shall my people rise to the perception that the kingdom of God hath come nigh, and that in the Nazarene hath been seen the universal king, the light of the Gentiles and the hope of Israel—slowly, but the day shall come.

And now, to-night, all is over, and he, our Master, sleepeth in the new tomb in Joseph's garden; and the women weep, and the Twelve are scattered and faint as sheep having no shepherd. But is all over? Can death hold him? Is he not its Lord? Shall death hold him when it could not hold me against his command? Surely it cannot be! Shall not he who called me, even me, from the unspeakable silence and mystery of the grave, break the bonds and burst the tomb and bring life out of corruption?

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

It was thus he spake unto Martha on that day. Can death conquer him who was the life indeed?

Let us wait and see.

HE said unto me, "Mary." He called me by my name. At the first I did not know him, but supposed it to be the gardener when some one approached down the path. In truth I hardly looked, for my eyes were blind with tears, and I knew nothing but that my Lord was gone from the tomb, and the poor, last hope of caring for his precious body was taken from me. For we had been busy all the day before, Joanna and Salome and I, with the others, in making ready the sweet spices.

I remember now what I said—it returneth to me—when he asked me why I wept. How could I not have known his voice? none was ever like it.

"Sir," I said, "if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him," for it was in my heart to go and with my own arms bear him away where no unloving hand should ever find him.

It was then that he spake my name, and I turned and saw that it was the Master, and falling at his feet I would have kissed them, but he forbade me.

It was himself; in his eyes was the old look of infinite pity and tenderness, and his mouth had the same sweetness as when he first spake to me

in Galilee and told me that my sins were forgiven. But in his feet and in his hands were the marks of nail prints; and in his forehead I saw the wounds which were made by the crown of thorns.

My heart yearned unspeakably when I saw these signs of his passion and death, but even in the same moment it overflowed for the joy of his living presence and his glory; for the grave could not hold him. He had overcome the sharpness of death itself.

Did he not tell us as we journeyed from Galilee that he should be crucified and should rise from the dead on the third day? Fools and slow of heart that we understood him not!

Then at his bidding I left him and returned with fear and great joy and told the disciples that I had seen the Lord. The first to reach him was Simon Peter

I AM at Cæsarea, lodged in a low, obscure dwelling without the city wall the better to escape notice. My chamber overlooks the harbor and the waves beat ADRIEL SPEAKS unceasingly on the stones below. The sound stirs my blood; I long for the morning, which shall see me embarked upon them in the ship which waiteth yonder, bound for Rome.

Yes, I am on my way to the city of my birth, there to witness, please God, a good confession for my Lord and Master, both to Jew and Roman.

Save for leaving the household in Bethany, it is without pain that I go hence, for I have seen the Lord, and heard him speak, and what further joy need I seek for myself in life? I know that he hath conquered both sin and death, and that in this new immortal frame his spirit is the same that we loved and his love is unquenchable to us-ward. The days may be few or many, but ere long he shall ascend, as he said unto Mary of Magdala, unto his Father and his God, to await in glory the coming of them whom he hath redeemed. Is not then all fulfilled for which my soul hath hoped, since he hath bidden us believe that it is expedient for us that he should go away? In a little while at longest I shall see him again and so be ever with him and behold the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.

All is peace to-night in my heart, but those days in the prison were a time of fiery trial. It was all swift and sudden, but now, as I recall it, I am sure that the tumult there in the temple on the day before the Passover was created of intention by the creatures of Annas, not so much because of what I said, as because he wanted me out of the way during the few days following.

He had found that I feared not him nor any of his kind, and that I had some small power over the people who heard me speak for our Lord. My birth was known to him ; my history ; my marvelous salvation through the power of Jesus ; and he was afraid of my influence in drawing forth some uprising when he and his fellows worked out their foul plot.

The Iscariot had been with them the night before, and we know now that all had been agreed upon between them. It was in the morning following that while I was speaking quietly of the Master a great hue and cry was raised, and I was dragged away by the Roman soldiers for raising a riot within the temple precincts. Well was it for me that I fell into the hands of the heathen rather than into those of mine own countrymen.

Plainly it was the purpose of the old priest to release me when all was over and I could do no more harm. Ah, how his plots and counterplots have been brought to naught, falling like flax before the awful flame of the power of God !

I had heard nothing of all which had come to pass until the close of the Sabbath, but within those narrow walls my spirit had well-nigh beaten its life out in its rage at being kept away from him ; for I was filled with presentiment of danger and death. Then, on that evening, as I walked

wildly to and fro in my narrow bounds, the heavy door was unbarred, and I saw the crafty face of Annas and his hated form before me. He wore a fawning smile and spake condescendingly unto me, feigning to have heard but that day of my imprisonment and asking me how it chanced that I, the son of a line of kings, should go about in the guise of a peasant.

"Because," I answered straightway, "the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. I am a poor man and a humble, and it suits me so to be."

"Speakest thou of the Nazarene?" he asked smiling smoothly. To which I answered :

"Thou knowest of whom I speak." He responded to this by nodding and smiling until his skin crinkled into a thousand lines, and he said :

"The Asmonæan blood was ever haughty and youth hath scant patience with the slowness of age. Thou art young yet, my worthy Adriel, and thou hast a great future before thee, if thou art but wise to seize thy good fortune when it comes to thee. Thou art not ignorant that it is in my power to have thee released from this place by a word?"

I told him that I supposed this was true.

"Yes," he went on, "and much more is in my hands, and many purposes in my heart concerning

thee to which I beg thee to hearken and take good heed."

After much leering and blinking which he thought would win my confidence but which in fact did but draw out my loathing, he cautiously unfolded his plans concerning me, which were in brief, that I, penniless adventurer as I was, should be lifted out of my low estate, and endowed by him with a portion of his own wealth, which all men know to be almost beyond estimate; and, thus furnished forth, as a prince of the blood, I should woo and wed (at the word I could not conceal my disgust) the daughter of Caiaphas, whose favor and virtue he greatly celebrated. This all having come to pass I could see myself that I would be at the highest point of power and wealth in Jerusalem, and the way to the high-priesthood itself would not be hard to find. Upon this point he scarcely touched, but left it to my own perception.

It was only by slow degrees that I came to believe that the old schemer was in earnest and most desirous of my consent to his purpose, which was well fitted, I can see, to strengthen his house in its favor with the people.

When he had done I said simply: "Hast thou forgotten that I am a follower of the Nazarene?"

"Ah," he said soothingly, "even so, but all that

hath become a thing of the past, thou knowest, to be remembered only as a dream of the night. It will not be reckoned against thee, my Adriel, although thy zeal hath been, I confess, most unwise and perilous. Still, a man can live down worse mistakes than that if he will but listen to good counsel."

"What meanest thou?" I cried, interrupting him, "when thou sayest that the following of the Christ hath become a thing of the past?"

His yellow face became purple with rage at my words.

"Let me not hear thee use that name again of the Nazarene impostor!" he exclaimed. "The things concerning him have an end. Knowest thou not that the man is dead, crucified between two other malefactors, by order of the governor, for plotting against Cæsar?"

What need to describe the wave of horror and dismay which overwhelmed me as I stood and heard this word? I doubted nothing it was true, from those things I had seen and felt early in the week before. But the work had been speedier than I thought, and I, caged in that prison, had struck not a single blow for my King's defense. "If only," my heart cried out, "the rest have stood by him like brave men and true!" To Annas I said, in scorn unspeakable, for well I knew that

he had worked upon the governor to his own ends :
“Thou art mistaken. The end is not yet. Jesus, whom ye by cruel hands have slain, shall rise again from the dead, even as he hath spoken.”

Again his cruel, crafty smile. “Hardly shall this be, my son,” he answered. “A watch hath been appointed at the sepulchre ; it is sealed and hath a great stone before it, and the watch is sure. We can trust our men.”

For a moment I grew dizzy before the depths of the man’s hideous hatred, which his face as well as his speech laid bare before me. Then, when my vision cleared again I held my hand high above him and cried with a loud voice :

“Get thee hence, thou servant of the evil one, ere I cast thee out with mine own hands ! Sooner than join hands with thee and thy hateful tribe, would I make my bed in a nest of vipers ! Hasten and leave me !”

He rose and went to the door shaking like a leaf.

“A day will come when thou wilt repent of this,” he snarled, as he slunk from my sight. “My revenge will follow thee, though thou goest to the ends of the earth, for what thou hast said.”

Then at the door he leaned back to say, “A few years in this little room may give thy zeal a chance to cool somewhat, my friend,” and so at last I was rid of his hated presence.

After that I was left alone; but a hope of escape soon came to me, for the guard in the fortress was changed in its order a few weeks later, and I had audience of the centurion of the new company. To my great wonder I found in him a secret believer in my Lord, whose death he had witnessed, and of it likewise he hath given me a full report.

From the first he was minded to secure my release, and five days ago I found a suit of soldier's mail in my cell, and at night the door was left unbarred and I made good my escape, no one challenging me, as I was taken for a member of the guard. My worthy friend, the centurion, bade me fear nothing on his account, since, he saith, the governor will be not ill pleased to do a despite unto Annas. Moreover, Pilate's soul is sick with remorse for this whole matter concerning the Christ, and speaking in his name was my only offense.

But he bade me make all possible haste to leave Judea, and if possible to go over seas until this excitement is past, for it hath risen again to a higher pitch than before, since the sepulchre in the garden was found empty, and our Lord was seen alive. A story hath been told by the soldiers that the disciples came and stole the body while they slept. From what source this cometh is not

hard to guess ; nevertheless many are deceived thereby.

So then I made haste and, in the darkness, I went out even unto Bethany, and for one little hour I was again with the good friends, and with her whom I cannot hope to see more until we meet in the Father's house. For I go unto Rome, counting not my life dear unto myself, nor hoping to save it, but only to spend what time there may be left in witnessing unto him. Mary wept when we parted, and yet was glad in her sorrow that we were counted worthy not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake ; and the noble Lazarus blessed me in the name of his father's house and in the name of the Lord. Thus, with love and sorrow in my heart I parted from them and made my way with all speed into Galilee. There, with many others, I saw our Lord himself with the glory ineffable of his deathless body, and so was comforted.

To-night, after weary marching and climbing over steep and rugged mountains, at last I saw the sea and gave thanks.

As I write, the wind hath risen and bloweth strong and free. I hear the sailors making ready and the rattle of the sails is music in my ears. The eyes of the ship already look westward ; I am ready to depart ; the day is at hand.

I WHO testify these things, am a disciple, and ye know that my testimony is true. For the Life was manifested and the Word was made flesh. Our eyes have looked upon him and our hands have touched him.

I speak of what I know and witness what I have seen.

He had given us word through Joanna and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, that we should go before him into Galilee; but we were scattered, and of some we knew not at that time even whither they had gone.

On that day, being in the old home at Capernaum (but a desolate place unto us now without the Lord, and we comfortless and having no purpose in aught), Simon Peter saith unto us, "I go a fishing," and we were glad that he so said, and we went with him; James, my brother, Thomas, and Nathanael, Andrew also, and Philip of Bethsaida.

We worked all night, finding some poor comfort in being again in the boat in which he had so often sat with us in the first year, before troubles came, but we caught nothing. In the early morning light, just at the dawn, we were aware of some one standing upon the shore who, calling to us, said:

"Children, have ye any meat?"

The first sound of that voice stirred me with a hope I dared not speak ; but when we had let down the net again at his bidding and had drawn a multitude of fishes, I was sure, and I said unto Simon, "It is the Lord!"

When we had come to land and had seen a fire of coals and fish laid thereon and bread, still no man durst ask him who stood upon the shore, concerning himself, albeit we knew it was the Lord,

It was after we had eaten that he spake openly, as our Master, unto Simon Peter, and three times over he spake, asking the same question, peradventure that Peter might thus blot out the three-fold denial which hath so bitterly torn his heart.

"Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?" Glad indeed was Peter that he asked him this.

"Yea, Lord," he answered ; "thou knowest that I love thee."

But at the third time of asking Peter was grieved, and with tears he cried :

"Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee!"

Of the disciple that writeth these things, afterward the Lord said unto Peter :

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

It is many weeks since that day on Tiberias.

We have come together, the eleven, in Jerusalem, and Lazarus and many friends have been with us ; and we have been of good cheer, looking for his appearing.

And now, for the last time, we have seen him, for he joined our company on Mount Olivet and led us out as far as unto Bethany, walking with us in the way which we had so often trod together. And being there he lifted up his hands and blessed us, and while he thus did, he was parted from us, for he was carried up into heaven and a cloud received him out of our sight.

I, John, saw these things.

With great joy have we returned to Jerusalem ; and the single purpose of our lives is to make all men know and believe that Jesus, who was of Nazareth, the son of Mary, is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that believing, they may have life through his name.



